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A CHRISTMAS SUGGESTION FOR EVERY PRIEST

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FOR CHRIST YOU ARE AMBASSADORS[1]

In accepting the invitation to address this assembly of the Catholic Students Mission Crusade I wished first of all to give encouragement to a work which has already done much to make both priests and people mission-minded, and also because I welcome every opportunity to speak to my brother-priests, and to those who look forward to the priesthood. I feel that it is both a sacred obligation and a high privilege for me to be here with you to meditate together on the graces given to us and the responsibilities assumed by us when we answered the call to our sublime vocation.

The very choice of title of this Association, Catholic Students Mission Crusade, indicates its holy purpose, the kindling of the apostolic flame that means zeal for the mission cause and the extension of Christ's blessed kingdom. What is the mission of the priesthood of Jesus Christ but a crusade in which the Knights of Christ, fortified with the sacramental armor of Holy Orders, go forth to win a world of souls? This crusade is a special endeavor to remind Catholics of the sacred obligation and privilege that is theirs, actively to co-operate in promoting the fulfillment of the prayer in which each one of us each day simply and sincerely petitions: "Our Father Who Art In Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done On Earth As It Is In Heaven."

The inspiration of our prayers is ever the same, that we ourselves and all men may live our lives in conformity with our Father's adorable will. "God wills it" was the cry of the devout in the ages of faith and "God wills it" must become the rallying motive of a movement of faith and of fortitude, of hope and of helpfulness, of patience and peace, in this age of hatred and horror, of woe and war, of desperation and despair. And as long as the crusaders of old remained faithful to the high purposes of their mission, as long as they maintained their fraternal unity and ambitioned only to serve Christ and His Church, just so long was their mission fruitful, just so long did their crusade endure. But

[1] An address of His Eminence, Francis Cardinal Spellman, before the Clerical Conference of the Catholic Students Mission Crusade, at McMahon Hall, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., on Nov. 8, 1946.

if and when they failed God, their mission failed and they failed themselves.

A similar crisis confronts the world today, as Paganism, Atheism and Communism threaten Christianity and Civilization. Danger now looms, not as a fog rolling northwards across the Mediterranean Basin, but as dark and red-tinged storm clouds, sweeping and spreading in many directions. Thoughtful men sense and perceive the dreadful dangers and harken to the voice of the Vicar of Christ heard above the storm, the voice of Our Holy Father—calm and undismayed, even though His Holiness is completely aware of the fury and peril of the impending conflict as he exhorts and urges his loyal, loving children to piety, unity, faith and good works.

Members of the Catholic Students Crusade, yours is a higher and even more sublime mission than was the call to the crusaders of the medieval world for, while the crusaders of old labored to reclaim the holy places sanctified by the physical presence of Christ and sacred with memories of His sufferings and death, your great goal is to gain for Christ not earthly soil but immortal souls. Yours is a fight not for earth, no matter how hallowed it may be, but for the Kingdom of God which is in man himself, and the sublimity of your call to crusade is evident from the weapons which Mother Church bids you to employ. They are not weapons that maim or destroy men's minds and bodies but those which break the fetters that bind the human spirit and release souls from the bondage of ignorance, falsehood, lust and greed. Yours are the weapons of the Spirit of God, the Sword of Truth, the breastplate of justice and the helmet of salvation. These instruments of grace must be employed by you in the same way that a physician uses his scalpel, not to destroy but to help and heal.

The world needs salvation and we are called to be saviours of the world. The world needs light and we are called to be apostles of light. The world dreads death and destruction and we are called to be givers and restorers to life. In a war-wrecked world, which wails in fear of more and worse warfare, we are called to be peace-makers. And we priests are called to be other Christs and to bring Christ to a world whose redemption can only be found in and through Him. And never more truly than in our day has it been necessary that those who preach a doctrine should live it.

I make this point as of paramount importance—if we, Catholic Crusaders, are to be effective in our good-willed, and God-blessed crusade, we must first put on and always wear the armor and use the arms of grace, which is the Charity of Christ.

Kings, Emperors, Sultans and Dictators have sought to dominate the world by force, but the only arms that can, and by God's mercy shall, hold the world captive are the arms of Christ which once nailed to the Cross would now close in loving embrace and, in a conquest by charity, hold forever captive by His Spirit's grace the children of men. Charity then, Charity that knows no barriers of race, class or social levels, the Charity that is truly Christ's love, must be the divine leaven working within our souls, the Charity that seeketh not its own and is not puffed up or subject to envy, the Charity that believeth, endureth and hopeth all things. In this Charity rests our golden opportunity for victory, salvation and peace even in the midst of the vast, mad vortex of confusion that swirls about and threatens to engulf the world.

My dear Crusaders for Christ, not only you who are called to be priests, but all of you who love and desire to serve the Lord, yours is a glorious vocation and a great challenge, for never before in the world's fateful course has evil and the spirit of wickedness more openly and more violently waged war against the Kingdom of God than in this, the moment of history in which we live. And we crusaders, captains and soldiers in Christ's army must engage in battle whenever and wherever Christ and Christ's Church are assailed. Ours, too, are God-graced opportunities to be Ambassadors of Christ to the kingdom of men, and if need be, and in very truth we may well be, also martyrs for Christ. Our vocations of priests, crusaders, ambassadors and martyrs summon us to heights of heroicity of virtue and courage and require us to build our spiritual foundations deep down on the bed-rock of humility.

Often as I walk through the constantly changing canyons of New York have I paused to watch the beginnings of the great buildings that tower there, births of skyscrapers. And I reflect that when man wishes to build, paradoxically he begins by digging, by excavating. This process has its similitude in the spiritual life. If we are to rise to God we must dig out from our characters the things that are not of God. We must imitate the

example of the noblest of all crusaders of Christ, the Apostle Paul, and like him, from Christ, take the power and the courage that inspired him to proclaim: "In Christ I can do all things." This truth is as valid for us as it was for St. Paul, and it is as true today as it was when first enunciated by the great apostle of the Gentiles. We, too, like St. Paul, are Ambassadors of Christ, sons of the Living and Eternal God. We, too, in Christ can and will win victories in the arduous soul-trying hours that await us beyond today's horizon. Already the eastern sky is alight with the dawn of battle as we go forward remembering that God has gifted our souls with the spiritual weapons of faith and eternal love. And all of us, brothers in Christ, must also be children of Mary, our life, our sweetness and hope. She is the channel of God's love to us. She is the glory of the priesthood, the help and joy of Christian souls. And she will be the Morning Star that will guide us crusaders in the army of her Divine Son till the end of the battle, till the end of life's journey, when cradled in her loving arms we put off the armor of battle as crusaders and put on the armor of Light and of Life eternal.

✠ Francis Cardinal Spellman.

The Necessity for Recollection in the Priestly Life

We become men only in proportion to our striving after a habit of reflection. As grace never takes the place of nature, but engrafts itself thereon, and uses it for its own ends, so your spiritual perfection, and, consequently, your priestly education, go hand-in-hand with your power of reflection. Now, a dissipated mind reveals itself by thoughtless words. It never dreams of weighing the *value,* the *consequence,* or the *suitableness* of its words. For such a one language becomes a mere reflex that outward excitement sets going, with no other guide than the emotions; it gushes from sensitiveness rather than from obedience to the dictates of a self-possessed will, a will that knows what it wants and wants what it knows to be right.

—From *Cardinal Mercier's Conferences Delivered to His Seminarists at Mechlin,* translated from the French by J. M. O'Kavanagh (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Bookshop, 1943), p. 43.

THE ASSUMPTION IN THE APOCRYPHA

Among the Apocrypha of the New Testament, works which, among other characteristics, tended to satisfy curiosity by adding new material to the known facts of the lives of Christ, the Blessed Virgin, and the Apostles,[1] there is an interesting group of documents dealing with the death, burial, and Assumption of Mary. These documents are interesting because they furnish such ancient and explicit accounts of the Assumption. Moreover, for an appreciably long time they formed an extremely popular type of literature as is evidenced by the fact that the account has come down to us in Coptic, Greek, Latin, Syriac, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Armenian versions.[2]

It is certain that this literature dealing with the *Transitus* of the Blessed Virgin belongs to the period of Christian antiquity.[3] M. James is of the opinion that none of these texts is older than the fourth century, and he thinks that the legend was first elaborated, if it did not originate, in Egypt.[4] Wilmart also considers Egypt as the point of departure of this legend and, as regards the

[1] J. Frey, "De libris apocryphis," *Institutiones Biblicae* I (Rome, 1929), 144.

[2] M. Jugie, *La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vièrge: Etude historico-doctrinale* (*Studi e Testi* 114 [Vatican City, 1944], 103-71); "La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vièrge dans la tradition des cinq premiers siècles," *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 300-305; "La littérature sur la mort et l'assomption de Marie à partir de la seconde moitié du VI[e] siècle," *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930) 265-95; A. Vitti, "Libri apocryphi de assumptione," *Verbum Domini* 6 (1926), 225-34; M. Bonnet, "Bemerkungen über die ältesten Schriften von der Himmelfahrt Mariä," *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 23 (1880), 222-47; L. Fonck, "Bemerkungen zu den ältesten Nachrichten über das Mariengrab," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 22 (1898), 498-507; H. Jürgens, "Kirchliche überlieferung von der leiblichen Aufnahme der seligsten Gottesmutter in der Himmel," *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 4 (1880), 595-650. Furthermore, Tischendorf, Wright, Budge, James, and Robinson give accaccounts of apocryphal literature in the prefaces of their works cited throughout this article.

[3] C. Tischendorf, *Apocalypses apocryphae* (Leipzig, 1866), p. xxxiv.

[4] M. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1924), pp. xix, 194. W. Wright and E. Budge likewise hold for the fourth century.

time, suggests the fifth century.[5] Until new discoveries are made in this field to prove otherwise, M. Jugie definitely holds that they originated towards the end of the fifth century. Moreover, he looks to Syria as the home of origin for the apocryphal accounts of the Assumption.[6]

At this time when the question of the Assumption is of such vital interest throughout the Catholic world, it is opportune to study the accounts of these Apocrypha. It must be noted at the outset that this article is limited to a consideration of the Assumption as such, which, in itself, was independent of the death of Mary.[7] True, these Apocrypha delight in expatiating at great length on Mary's death and burial, but details on these subjects will be given only in so far as they form a necessary background for an intelligent understanding of the Assumption narratives. For the sake of convenience the accounts will be treated according to the language in which they were written. Indications will be given of the origin, time, dependence, and influences of these narratives. However, it must be stated that, in this regard, there is much that is problematical and conjectural.

COPTIC ACCOUNTS

The Coptic texts are preserved in Bohairic and Sahidic, the dialects of northern and southern Egypt respectively. The *First Bohairic Account* purports to be the work of Evodius, an eyewitness, who is represented as the bishop of Rome, the successor and spiritual son of St. Peter, and one of the seventy-two disciples.[8] According to this narrative, Mary died on the twenty-first of Tobi (January) when Jesus came to take her to Himself from

[5] A. Wilmart, *L'ancien récit latin de l'assomption* (*Studi e Testi* 59 [Vatican City, 1933], 323). A. Baumstark likewise points out the influence of Egypt. Cf. "Der leibliche Himmelfahrt der allerseligsten Jungfrau, "*Oriens Christianus* 4 (1904), 390.

[6] M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 107 f.; *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 300-303.

[7] J. Bellamy, "Assomption de la Sainte Vièrge," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* I (Paris, 1931), 2127; M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 6.

[8] F. Robinson, *Coptic Apocryphal Gospels* (Texts and Studies IV, 2 [Cambridge, 1896], 44, 207; M. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. 194. The word "first" does not indicate priority of time. It is simply the title under which the fragments are known.

the house where she was living in Jerusalem with the Apostles and others. After Jesus ascended with Mary's soul in the chariot of the Cherubim, the Apostles buried her body in the field of Jehosaphat, a wall of fire meanwhile having blinded the Jews who intended to burn the body. The Apostles then kept a three and a half days vigil at the tomb. At mid-day on the fourth day the Apostles received the promise of Mary's future Assumption, for a great voice came from the heavens saying:

> Go ye everyone to his place until the seventh month. For behold I have hardened the heart of the chief priest and of all the Jews, that they may not perceive nor know this place any more, nor seek the body of My Virgin Mother until I take it up to the heavens with Me. And ye all the disciples, and the virgins that have tarried with you, come ye all hither on the sixteenth of the month Mesore, that ye may see My Virgin Mother when I take her to the heavens with Me, her soul being in her body, living as it was on earth with you, that ye may believe with all your heart the resurrection which shall be to all flesh.[9]

After seven months, on the fifteenth of Mesore (August), they returned to the tomb where they spent the night in vigil. On the sixteenth Christ appeared to them. Peter, in answer to the question of Christ, explained that they were grieved because He had not shown Mary to them since her death. Christ told them that her body was with them guarded by angels, but that her soul was in the heavenly places where the powers of the height sing her praise. After saying this, Christ sent for Mary, who appeared riding in the chariot of the Cherubim and shining ten thousand times more than the sun and the moon. The account then describes her Assumption as follows:

> And the Lord called into the tomb, and raised the body of His Virgin Mother, and put her soul into her body again; and we saw it living in the body even as it was with us formerly, wearing the flesh. And our Saviour stretched out His hand and set her on the chariot with Him. And our Saviour answered and said to us in His gentle voice, Behold My beloved Mother. This is she whose virgin womb carried me nine months and I was three years also receiving suck from her breasts which were sweeter than honey. Behold ye see her face to face, raised by Me from the dead, and she has blessed you all.[10]

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[9] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* I, 17 (F. Robinson, *op. cit.*, 63).

[10] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* I, 18 (*Ibid.*, 64 f.).

There exist two Sahidic fragments which are regarded as Sahidic translations of the Bohairic account of Evodius. However, it must be admitted that the Sahidic fragments contain very important and striking differences. The second fragment mentions that, as the Jews came out to harm the body of Mary as it was being carried to the sepulchre, "straightway there came from heaven a great choir of angels without number; and they approached, and straightway caught away the body of the Virgin."[11] Thus, on the day of death, as the account later states, the body of the Virgin was translated to the earthly paradise where it was placed beneath the tree of life. This Sahidic fragment then goes on to speak as though the Assumption took place eight days later. The setting, in general, is the same as that described in the first Bohairic account. The Apostles went back to the house where they grieved because they had not seen Mary. Christ then appeared telling them that her body was under the tree of life in paradise. The stage is set for Christ to raise up the body of Mary and show it to the Apostles. The fragment ends with Christ sending for the Virgin that she may be manifest and proclaim the honors she has seen.[12]

The *Second Bohairic Account* is contained in a discourse of Theodosius who was probably the Jacobite Patriarch of Alexandria from 536 to 567/8.[13] One of the features of this narrative is the strong insistence on the Assumption, as seen by repeated promises concerning it. The same general setting is found here as in the first Bohairic account. Mary lived in Jerusalem with the virgins, and Peter and John, mindful of the command of Christ, watched over her. On the twentieth of Tobi, Peter and John

[11] *Sahidic Fragments of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 16 (*Ibid.*, 81-83). In the *Sahidic Fragments* I, 7, the promise is made of the translation of Mary's body. Christ is represented as saying to Mary: "I also will wrap thy body and soul in the garments of heaven, which I have brought from the heavens with me; and will place thy body under the tree of life of Paradise, and make the Cherubim with a sword of fire overshadow thee."

[12] *Sahidic Fragments of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 17-18 (*Ibid.*, 85-89).

[13] F. Robinson, *Coptic Apocryphal Gospels*, 215. Robinson omits the long prologue and the epilogue. For the full and complete text, cf. M. Chaine, "Les Discours de Théodose patriarche d'Alexandrie," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* (1933-1934), 272-304. Of the Coptic narrations being considered in this section Jugie thinks that this is the oldest and goes back to the sixth century. Cf. *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 128.

found Mary sad because Christ came and told her of her approaching death on the following day. The Apostles, too, were sad on hearing this, but then Christ came and comforted them by the promise of Mary's future Assumption, saying:

> Be of good cheer, My friends and apostles. I will not suffer her to be long away from you, but she shall appear to you quickly. There are two hundred and six days from her death until her holy assumption. I will bring her unto you arrayed in this body again, even as this body also, as ye see her now, whilst she is with you. And I will translate her up to the heavens to be with My Father and the Holy Ghost, that she may continue praying for you all.[14]

After Mary died, Christ gave injunctions regarding the burial and then once again repeated the promise of the Assumption, saying: "In two hundred and six days I will come with her blessed soul, and make it one with her body, and I will take her to the heavens in glory to be with my good Father and the Holy Ghost."[15] The third prediction of the Assumption took place as the Apostles were bearing the body of Mary to the field of Jehosaphat. The Jews wondered whose body was being brought forth to burial. Then one of them, a Galilean who knew the Apostles well, filled with the Holy Ghost, said to the Jews: "This corpse that is borne, this is the body of Mary, the daughter of Joakim and Anna, who bare the Messias, which is Christ. He it was who healed your sick, and gave light to your eyes, and raised your dead. We believe that as He raised your dead, He will raise His mother also, and will take her to the heavens with Him."[16]

According to this narrative the Assumption took place two hundred and six days after Mary's death. During this time the Apostles and the others frequently went to the place where they had left the body. Then on the fifteenth of Mesore, in the evening, they gathered at the tomb keeping a vigil. On the morning of the sixteenth Christ appeared and uttered a very long prayer over the coffin. The account then goes on to describe the Assumption as follows:

> When the Lord had said these things over the coffin of stone, straight-

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[14] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 5 (F. Robinson, *op. cit.*, 109).

[15] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 6 (*Ibid.*, 113).

[16] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 7 (*Ibid.*, 117).

way it opened: for it was shut even as the ark of Noah aforetime, which no one could open save God, who shut it aforetime. Forthwith the body of the honourable Virgin arose, and embraced its own soul, even as two brothers who are come from a strange country, and they were united with another. . . . Now when these things had come to pass, He went up to the heavens, blessing us and those who shall walk after His law saying, Peace be unto you, My friends and members. Peace be unto the sepulchre, which was a dwelling place of the body of My mother. . . . Peace be unto those who shall always accomplish the memorial of My mother in mercy and judgment. She also, at once our Lady and our succourer, blessed us: and we saw them no more. But the voice of the powers that sang hymns before them was sounding in our ears, saying, Alleluia. . . . Then we understood that today there were brought unto the King virgins, even the soul and body which were united.[17]

In another Sahidic document, falsely attributed by Revillout to the *Gospel of the Twelve Apostles*, there is a fragment dealing with the death and resurrection of the Virgin which is supposed to be written by an eyewitness.[18] Like many of the Coptic texts, this envisions the Assumption as taking place on the sixteenth of Mesore. However, a feature peculiar to this as a Coptic text is the insertion of the narrative of the high priest whose hands were cut off when he touched the bier. According to the sequence of this fragment, the Apostles buried the body of Mary in a new tomb and then waited there for the Lord to raise up the body of the Virgin and take it to heaven as He had already promised. Meanwhile, the Apostles bade the virgins go home in peace. Before they left, Peter and John, speaking of the body which they had buried in the tomb, said: "We believe that he will not leave it there forever. He will come to raise it as He said."[19] As the Apostles were keeping their vigil, the high priest, now converted to the faith, came and told the Apostles that the Jews were plotting to burn the body. Fortunately, God caused the Jews to forget about their plot so that they did not seek out the tomb of

[17] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 9 (*Ibid.*, 125-127).

[18] E. Revillout, *Les Apocryphes Coptes, Evangile des douze Apôtres, Fragment 16e, Mort de la Vièrge* (*Patrologia Orientalis* II [Paris, 1907], 174-183). This is later than the seventh century Greek discourse of John of Thessalonica, for the first part of this fragment recalls that of John. Cf. M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient*, 29 (1930), 267, n. 2; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 154.

[19] *Mort de la Vièrge* (E. Revillout, *op. cit.*, 177).

the Virgin. As the Apostles were thus gathered and frightened, again the promise of the Assumption was made, for a voice said to them: "Fear not, my chosen ones, no harm shall befall you. . . . Remain where you are. I shall raise up the body without delay."[20]

On the sixteenth of Mesore the actual assumption took place. Those gathered at the tomb saw flashes of lightning. Looking at the entrance of the tomb, they noticed that it was opened and filled with great light. Then a fiery chariot descended from heaven with Jesus in it. Jesus then called out to the tomb: "Mary, My mother, My place of repose in which I have lived, arise. Leave behind thee these burial garments and come out of the tomb. As My Father raised Me from the dead, I shall raise thee to take thee to heaven with Me."[21] When Mary came out of the tomb, Christ extended his hand to her and had her take her place in the chariot with him. Then choirs of angels marched before them until they reached heaven. Leaving no possibility of doubt regarding Mary's Assumption, the fragment adds: "And the flesh with which the Virgin was clothed in the womb of her mother, the same flesh has been raised up. It is at the right hand of her son Jesus Christ. She prays for the whole world."[22]

In the Coptic work entitled, *The Resurrection of Christ by Bartholomew the Apostle*, there is a short section dealing with the death of Mary. In this, Christ, having risen from the dead, is represented as appearing to Mary and addressing her in the following words:

> And when thou shalt come forth from the body, I myself will come with my Father, and Michael and all the angels, and then thou shalt be with us in the Kingdom. And over thy body I will make the Cherubim, having a sword of fire, to keep watch, and twelve hundred angels also shall watch over it until I take it to my kingdom.[23]

The fragment of the same work, published by Revillout, speaks of Christ coming with Michael and Gabriel to free Mary from the

[20] *Mort de la Vièrge* (*Ibid.*, 180).

[21] *Mort de la Vièrge* (*Ibid.*, 181).

[22] *Mort de la Vièrge* (*Ibid.*, 183). Despite the influence of John of Thessalonica mentioned above in note 18, this fragment at the end reverts to the Coptic recensions and repeats the theme centering around the sixteenth of Mesore.

[23] E. Budge, *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (Oxford, 1913) p. 192.

fear of death and to take her to the abode of immortality that she might be with Christ in his kingdom. Then it goes on to mention that her body will be left under the tree of life in paradise until the time of the kingdom of Christ.[24] This work stresses the theme of the incorruptibility of the body of Mary and does not envision a resurrection or true assumption.

GREEK ACCOUNTS

Among the Greek accounts, the *Transitus Mariae* which held a prominent place and exercised a wide influence is that of Pseudo-John, a work which dates approximately from the second half of the sixth century.[25] In this there is a very strong insistence on the incorruptibility of Mary's body and of the translation of that body to paradise. The first inkling of this is found in Mary's conversation with John when he was miraculously brought on a cloud from Ephesus to Bethlehem, whither Mary had retired from Jerusalem when the angel Gabriel announced her approaching death. Mary informed John that the Jews had sworn to burn her body. Then it was that John said: "Thy holy and precious body shall not see corruption."[26] Meanwhile the other Apostles, living and dead, were gathered unto Mary. Due to signs and miracles, associated with Mary's presence in Bethlehem, the envy of the

[24] E. Revillout, *Les Apocryphes Coptes, Evangile de Saint Barthelemy* (*Patrologia Orientalis* II [Paris, 1907], 193). Cf. M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 123 f. A discourse which has come down under the name of Cyril of Jerusalem does not mention the assumption or translation of the body, but speaks of it being buried in the heart of the earth. Here it is preserved incorrupt. However, Pseudo-Cyril says that no one shall find the place until the coming of Christ. Cf. E. Budge, *Miscellaneous Coptic Texts* (Oxford, 1915), pp. 642 ff.; F. Robinson, *Sahidic Fragments of the Life of the Virgin* IV (*Coptic Apocryphal Gospels*, 25-41). A Sahidic account published by Zoega ends with the burial of Mary on the twenty-first of Tobi. In this account Jesus, in announcing Mary's death, promises that after a certain time her body will be transported to heaven by the angels. Cf. *Catalogus codicum copticorum manuscriptorum qui in Museo Velitris adservantur* (Rome, 1810; Leipzig, 1903), pp. 223 f.; M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 137.

[25] C. Tischendorf, *Apocalypses Apocryphae*, pp. 95-112. Jugie places it some time between 550-80. Cf. *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 268, 276 ff.; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 117.

[26] Pseudo-John, *Liber de dormitione Mariae* 10 (C. Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, p. 98).

Jews was aroused and they came to burn the house. However, Mary and the others were brought back to Jerusalem on clouds. There at Jerusalem, on a Sunday, Mary died. When Christ, surrounded by the angels, came to take Mary to Himself, He said: "Behold, henceforth shall thy precious body be translated unto paradise, and thy holy soul shall be in the heavens in the treasuries of My Father in surpassing brightness, where there is peace and rejoicings of the holy angels."[27] The account of the translation of Mary's body is told very soberly. The Apostles laid her body in a new tomb in Gethsemani and at once a sweet odor came out of the sepulchre. Then for three days there was heard the voices of angels glorifying Christ who was born of Mary. After three days the voices were heard no longer, and thus the Apostles perceived that the spotless and precious body of Mary was translated into paradise.[28] Some manuscripts exclude the burial and state that, as the Apostles bore the bed, twelve clouds of light caught them up together with the body of Mary and translated them to paradise. Describing the events after the translation of the body, Pseudo-John says:

> . . . we beheld Elizabeth the mother of the holy John the Baptist, and Anna the mother of our Lady, and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and David singing Alleluia, and all the choirs of the saints worshipping the precious body of the Mother of the Lord, and we saw a place of light, than which light nothing is brighter, and a great fragrance came from that place whereunto her precious and holy body was translated in paradise, and a melody of them that praised Him who was born of her.[29]

Thus Pseudo-John does not know of the resurrection of Mary nor of her glorious Assumption in body and soul into heaven. For him, it is a translation of the virginal body to an earthly paradise where it is preserved incorrupt in a sweet-scented atmosphere of light. As is evident, there is a vast difference between a true assumption and a mere translation as narrated here.[30] Yet, among the Byzantines, with whom the idea of a true resurrection was by far the more common tradition, there was a parallel tra-

[27] *Liber de dormitione Mariae* 39 (*Ibid.*, p. 108).

[28] *Liber de dormitione Mariae* 48 (*Ibid.*, p. 111).

[29] *Liber de dormitione Mariae* 49 (*Ibid.*, pp. 111 f.).

[30] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 278; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 119 f.

dition attesting to a belief in a mere translation of the body of Mary to an earthly paradise where it was preserved incorrupt.[31]

An outstanding accomplishment of modern scholarship is M. Jugie's edition of the discourse of John of Thessalonica on the *Dormitio* of Mary.[32] John was archbishop of Thessalonica in the first part of the seventh century, namely, from 610 to 649.[33] From the chronological standpoint it is probable that this discourse preceded by some years the homily on the same subject which has come down to us under the name of Modestus, patriarch of Jerusalem 631-34. Thus it is probable that this discourse of John of Thessalonica is the first in a series of such works which were to be so characteristic of Byzantine homiletical literature.[34]

In order to appreciate this discourse some idea of its background must be given. At the outset, John of Thessalonica states that, after the Ascension, Mary lived for a while at Jerusalem with the Apostles in the home of St. John. Shortly after the Apostles went forth to preach the Gospel throughout the world, Mary died a natural death. This death of Mary was accompanied by wondrous miracles, and certain eyewitnesses of these marvels wrote an account of them. However, in the course of time, heretics tampered with this apostolic account, adding unbecoming things, and surcharging it with elements utterly out of harmony with the spirit of the Catholic Church. John of Thessalonica, therefore, set himself to the task of going through the different books dealing with the *Transitus* of Mary. His purpose was to eliminate all the chaff of the interpolations of the heretics and to extract only the wheat of the true history of what really happened. Moreover, he had a special purpose in doing this. After speaking of the apostolic account of the death of Mary (an account which he simply takes for granted), he mentions that almost the whole world annually observes this feast of Mary. There are, however, a few exceptions to this general practice, one of which being his

[31] M. Jugie, *Patrologia Orientalis* 19 (Paris, 1926), 369.

[32] M. Jugie, *Homélies mariales byzantines, Saint Jean archevêque de Thessalonique* (*Patrologia Orientalis* 19 [Paris, 1926], 344-438).

[33] *Ibid.*, 344-49, 357. Cf. "La vie et les oeuvres de Jean de Thessalonique," *Echos d'Orient* 21 (1922), 293-307; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 139 ff.

[34] M. Jugie, *Patrologia Orientalis* 19 (1926), 349; J. Rivière, "Le plus vieux 'transitus' latin et son dérivé grec," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 8 (1936), 13.

own Church of Thessalonica. The failure to celebrate this feast was not due to negligence on the part of his predecessors in Thessalonica. Rather it was due to the baneful influence of these accounts which had been falsified by the heretics. His immediate purpose, then, is to institute this feast in his Church, and for this purpose he furnishes his flock with a recital of the true history of Mary's last moments on earth.[35]

As is evident, John of Thessalonica leaned heavily on the Apocrypha. He himself states that he searched out his information on this subject in different books. Fortunately, it is possible to determine in some way the sources on which he has built his discourse. It is established that hardly anything has been drawn from the Greek apocryphal account of Pseudo-John. M. Jugie pointed out that the source from which he principally borrowed is the sixth century Latin account of Pseudo-Melito. There are also in this discourse traces of other Apocrypha, especially of the Coptic accounts under the names of Evodius and Theodosius.[36] Yet it must not be forgotten that John of Thessalonica extracted his true account of what really happened at the death of Mary from various books. What he really does, then, is to furnish a new narration, a narration that is *sui generis*. His is a new expurgated edition of the Apocrypha which are characterized by extravagant, inconsistent, and contradictory elements. But, in the final analysis, the discourse of John of Thessalonica remains in the realm of the Apocrypha.[37]

Jugie has edited what he calls a probable reconstruction of the primitive text. However, in the manuscripts, the epilogue (the section relating the events after the death of Mary) varied so greatly that Jugie finally ended up by giving the various epilogues of the manuscripts containing the primitive text.[38] The Vatican manuscript 2072, which Jugie thinks represents the original,[39] states that the Apostles carried the body of Mary and buried it in a new sepulchre which the Lord had shown them. Then they

[35] John of Thessalonica, *Dormitio Dominae nostrae Deiparae ac semper Virginis Mariae* 1-2 (*Patrologia Orientalis* 19 [1926], 375-78).

[36] *Patrologia Orientalis* 19 (1926), 370 f.; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 141.

[37] *Patrologia Orientalis* 19 (1926), 372.

[38] *Ibid.*, 356 f., 369, 401-405.

[39] *Ibid.*, 353, 356, 369.

remained there three days. After the third day they opened the sepulchre to venerate the remains of Mary and found only the burial garments "because she was taken up to her eternal inheritance by Christ who took flesh of her."[40]

As is evident, this conclusion of John of Thessalonica is extremely short and restrained. It seems to have an allusion to the Assumption, properly so called, but is not very explicit. However, it must be borne in mind that his purpose was to institute a feast centering around the *Dormitio* of Mary, as such, and to write an account of the miracles associated with Mary's death. The Assumption, that is, the glorification of Mary in body and soul and her entrance into heaven, is beyond his scope. Without doubt he believed it, but he did not mention it in a clear and explicit manner.[41]

LATIN ACCOUNTS

The most widely known Latin account of the *Transitus Mariae* is that of Pseudo-Melito,[42] a work which dates from some time in the first half of the sixth century and a work which Wilmart characterizes as a quasi-official version in the Latin Church.[43] This Pseudo-Melito, purporting to emendate a former version supposedly infected with heresy, claims to give a simple account of those things which he had learned regarding this matter from St. John. This *Transitus*, so clear and explicit regarding the Assumption, has an outline, make-up, and sequence that are different from the others thus far considered. This narrative opens with Christ on the Cross commending Mary to the special care of St. John. When the Apostles went forth to preach the Gospel Mary lived in the house of John's parents on Mount Olivet. One day, two years after the Ascension, Mary was overcome with a desire for Christ and wept. Suddenly an angel came bearing a palm branch and announced her death in three days.

[40] John of Thessalonica, *Dormitio Dominae nostrae Deiparae ac semper Virginis Mariae* 14 (*Patrologia Orientalis* 19 [1926], 401 f.). Cf. M. Jugie, "Analyse du discours de Jean de Thessalonique sur la dormition de la Sainte Vièrge," *Echos d'Orient* 22 (1923), 385-97.

[41] *Patrologia Orientalis* 19 (1926), 369 f.; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 141 f.

[42] C. Tischendorf, *Apocalypses apocryphae*, pp. 124-36.

[43] A. Wilmart, *L'ancien récit latin de l'assomption* (*Studi e Testi* 59 [1933], 323); M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 303-305; *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 266, 271-75; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 112.

Mary then asked that the Apostles be gathered unto her. John arrived first, and the other Apostles later, all having been transported on clouds. On the third day at the third hour Christ, surrounded by angels singing the praises of the Lord, came and summoned Mary out of life, delivering the soul of Mary to Michael to be taken to heaven.[44]

The Apostles buried the body of Mary in a new tomb in the valley of Josaphat. When they had closed the sepulchre they sat at the tomb as the Lord had commanded them. Suddenly Christ appeared with a great multitude of angels and greeted the Apostles. After reminding them of his promise that those who followed Him would, in the regeneration, sit on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, He asked them what He should do with Mary in whom He had dwelled. Then Peter and the Apostles said:

> Lord, thou hast chosen this thy handmaid to become thy immaculate chamber, and us thy apostles for the ministry. Before the ages thou has foreknown all things with the Father, with whom to thee and the Holy Spirit there is one equal divinity and infinite power. If therefore it might be brought about by the power of thy grace it has seemed right to us thy servants that, as thou, having overcome death, reignest in glory, so thou shouldst raise up thy body of thy mother and take her with thee rejoicing in heaven.[45]

At once Christ commanded Michael to bring forth the soul of Mary. Michael then rolled back the stone from the sepulchre and the Lord said: "Arise, my love and my mother. Thou who didst not suffer corruption by carnal intercourse, thou shalt not suffer corruption in the sepulchre."[46] When Mary had come forth from the tomb she blessed the Lord who then gave her over to the angels to be brought to paradise. After Christ had bestowed his blessing on the Apostles, "He was lifted up in a cloud and received into heaven, and the angels with Him carrying the Blessed Mary into the paradise of God."[47]

Another Latin *Transitus* is the object of much controversy. The account of Pseudo-Melito, as has just been seen, is a Catholic

[44] Pseudo-Melito, *Transitus Beatae Mariae* 6-8 (Cf. Tischendorf, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-30).

[45] *Transitus Beatae Mariae* 15 (*Ibid.*, p. 134).

[46] *Transitus Beatae Mariae* 16 (*Ibid.*, p. 135).

[47] *Transitus Beatae Mariae* 17 (*Ibid.*, pp. 135 f.).

adaptation of a proscribed work. As the basis of Pseudo-Melito there is a primitive account, attributed to a certain Leucius and supposedly heretical, which Pseudo-Melito attempted to replace. It is this account which is condemned in the document known as the Gelasian Decree.[48] In 1933, on the basis of manuscripts from France, Spain, Italy, and the Germanic countries, dating from the end of the eighth to the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, Dom Wilmart published what he called a basic or neutral text of the ancient Latin account.[49] J. Rivière then wrote of the importance of this oldest Latin version of the *Transitus*, and claimed that the seventh-century discourse of John of Thessalonica was modeled not on the sixth century work of Pseudo-Melito but on the text published by Wilmart, which he thought should be dated at least during the course of the fifth century.[50] In his recent work, M. Jugie maintains his stand that John of Thessalonica modeled his discourse principally on Pseudo-Melito, and he claims that the Latin text of Wilmart is really nothing else but a late seventh century abridged translation of the discourse of John of Thessalonica. The occasion for the translation, he says, was the introduction into Rome of the feast of the *Dormitio* under Pope Sergius (687-701), a Pope of Graeco-Syrian origin.[51] The Latin manuscripts of this recension present a great diversity in the final section dealing with the events after the burial of Mary. The Apostles are represented as sitting at the tomb when Christ appeared with a multitude of angels. Then the more common and favorable reading of the finale concludes:

And thus He commanded Michael to take the body of the blessed Virgin in the clouds. And when he had taken it, the Lord told the Apostles to draw near to Him. And when the Apostles approached the

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[48] E. von Dobschütz, *Das Decretum Gelasianum* (*Texte und Untersuchungen* 38, 4 [Leipzig, 1912], 53). Cf. A. Wilmart, *Studi e Testi* 59 (1933), 323 f.; M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 104, n. 1, 110. On the *Decretum*, cf. G. Bardy, "Gelase (decret de)," *Supplement du dictionnaire de la Bible* 3 (1938) 579-90; K. Bihlmeyer, *Kirchengeschichte* (Paderborn, 1936), p. 298.

[49] A. Wilmart, *L'ancien récit latin de l'assomption* (*Studi e Testi* 59 [1933], 325-57).

[50] J. Rivière, "Le plus vieux 'transitus' latin et son dérivé grec," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 8 (1936), 5-23.

[51] M. Jugie, *La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vièrge: Etude historico-doctrinale* (*Studi e Testi* 114 [Vatican City, 1944], 151).

Lord Jesus, they too were taken up in the clouds. And the Lord commanded the clouds to go to paradise under the tree of life. And the clouds set the body of Mary down in paradise, and it is there glorifying God with all His elect. And the angels brought the soul of the blessed Mary and placed it in her body, at the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, and it will have glory there throughout the eternal ages amen.[52]

Among the variant finales, one simply speaks of the translation of the body without any account of the resurrection of Mary. Others simply state that the holy Mother of God was assumed in glory, or that the soul of Mary entered heaven with the angels and then re-entered her body.[53]

SYRIAC ACCOUNTS

The Syriac language is extremely rich in literature dealing with the general theme of the *Transitus* of Mary.[54] The fragments of a work entitled *Obsequies of the Holy Virgin* merit special attention and importance. This is a very ancient apocryphon which, according to W. Wright, the editor of these Syrian fragments, belongs to the latter half of the fifth century.[55] In fact, M. Jugie prefers to call this not a recension, but an original, and sees in it the first of the apocrypha dealing with the *Dormitio*.[56] From fragments which Wright has outlined in the preface, the general setting is readily seen. Christ appeared to Mary when she was dying and then entrusted her soul to Michael. During the funeral procession the Jews who wished to disturb the corpse were blinded. One of them, however, tried to overturn the bier and, in punishment, lost his arms. After his arms were restored he went among the Jews and gave sight to the blind with a staff which Peter had given him.[57]

[52] *Adsumptio Sanctae Mariae* 48-50 (*Studi e Testi* 59 [1933], 356 f.).

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] M. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 219-27.

[55] W. Wright, *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament, collected and edited from Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1865), preface, p. 7.

[56] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 300-302; *Patrologia Orientalis* 19 (1926), 370, n. 2; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 108.

[57] W. Wright, *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament*, preface, pp. 11-15.

The main section of the fragment opens with the Apostles gathered at the tomb and arguing over the manner in which they were to preach. This vigil apparently lasted three days for the Apostles are pictured as saying to Paul: "Brother Paul, speak to us with words, because we harken unto thee kindly; for our Lord hath sent thee to us to gladden us during these three days."[58] While this discussion was still going on, Christ came down from from heaven with Michael and sat among the Apostles. The Assumption of Mary is told very simply as follows:

> And after these things our Lord made a sign to Michael, and Michael began to speak with the voice of a mighty angel. And angels descended on three clouds; and the number of angels on each cloud was a thousand angels, uttering praises before Jesus. And the Lord said to Michael: "Let them bring the body of Mary into the clouds." And when the body of Mary had been brought into the clouds, our Lord said to the Apostles that they should draw near to the clouds. And when they came to the clouds they were singing with the voice of angels. And our Lord told the clouds to go to the gate of Paradise. And when they had entered Paradise, the body of Mary went to the tree of life; and they brought her soul and made it enter her body. And straightway the Lord dismissed the angels to their places.[59]

Thus, this Syriac fragment is remarkable not only for its antiquity, but also for its explicit affirmation of Mary's resurrection and the Assumption.[60]

Another early Syriac version is that contained in the work, *The Departure of my Lady Mary from this World.*[61] This complete work, divided into six books, is based on manuscripts from the second half of the sixth century, and is an early translation of one of the then latest Apocrypha of the New Testament, namely, the *Transitus Beatae Virginis.*[62] It purports to be a translation of a

[58] *Obsequies of the Holy Virgin* (W. Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 44).

[59] *Obsequies of the Holy Virgin* (*Ibid.*, pp. 46 f.).

[60] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 302.

[61] W. Wright, *The Departure of my Lady Mary from the World* (*Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record*, Fourth Series 6 [Jan. 1865], 417 ff; Fourth Series 7 [Apr. 1865], 110 ff. Cf. A. Lewis, *Transitus Mariae* (Studia Sinaitica XI, Apocrypha Syriaca [London, 1902], 12-69. In these pages Mrs. Lewis gives a translation of the same work, divided into five books, and based on manuscripts a little earlier than those used by Wright.

[62] W. Wright, *The Journal of Sacred Literature*, Fourth Series 6 (Jan. 1865), 417.

Greek account attributed to the Apostles, and especially to James, Bishop of Jerusalem. Hence, the writer is sometimes referred to as the Syrian Pseudo-James.[63] Actually, the work is based in part on the Greek work of Pseudo-John. However, the redactor develops the theme of Pseudo-John with a great deal of liberty and adds original episodes of his own.[64]

According to this recension Mary, while still alive, was brought from her home in Jerusalem to the valley of Gethsemani to await death. In the valley there were three caves, in one of which was a clay bench. By the order of the Holy Spirit the Apostles were bidden to place Mary on that bench and to minister to her in her last hours.[65] Christ, surrounded by a host of angels and saints, came on a Sunday to witness the death of Mary. As soon as the soul of Mary departed from her body Christ "sent it to the mansions of the Father's house."[66] This account excludes the burial of Mary, for as soon as she had died Christ commanded the Apostles "to place the blessed one in a chariot of light" and then "the twelve Apostles bore it as it went to the paradise of Eden."[67]

After the body had been translated to Eden, Christ came and raised up the body of Mary saying: "To show thee the glory of my Father's house I am come to thee." On arising Mary worshipped Christ and there in Eden saw the mansions of the just and the banquet halls of the martyrs. Then Christ said: "Come, ascend and see the heaven in which is the glory of the Father." After mounting these heights Mary saw "the Holy Father, and the beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, and the Father being glorified by His Son, and the Son by His Father, and the Holy Spirit between the two of them."[68] When Mary had seen this and other visions, Christ took his mother and brought her back to the Paradise of Eden.[69]

[63] W. Wright, *The Journal of Sacred Literature*, Fourth Series 7 (Apr. 1865), 131-33.

[64] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 265 f., 267 f., 279 ff.; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 120, 121.

[65] *The Departure of my Lady from the World* 3 (*Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record*, Fourth Series 7 [Apr. 1865], 148).

[66] *The Departure of my Lady Mary from the World* 4 (*Ibid.*, 151).

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] *The Departure of my Lady from the World* 5 (*Ibid.*, 156 ff.).

[69] *The Departure of my Lady Mary from the World* 6 (*Ibid.*, 158).

This sixth century Syriac recension, then, definitely teaches that Mary, in body and soul, left the earth, for the writer puts this prayer on the lips of Mary prior to her death: "And make bad times cease from the earth when mankind, Lord, hold a commemoration to my body and spirit which have quitted the earth."[70] Moreover, it states that her body was transplanted to the Paradise of Eden and that her soul went to the mansion of the Father's house. However, it is very difficult to determine whether the narrator envisions a true resurrection for Mary. The resurrection in Eden seems to be only temporary. As is known, the writer states that Mary was brought back to Eden. Previously he had said that her soul was in the mansions of the Father's house. The mansions of the Father could not be identified with the Paradise of Eden.[71]

There are other Syriac versions which are of later origin even though they contain the primitive apocryphal legend. Syriac fragments of two different recensions have been edited in one work by W. Wright.[72] The fragments of the first recension, called *The History of the Virgin Mary the Holy Mother of God* repeat the first part of Pseudo-John and end with the gathering of the Apostles for the death of Mary. The second recension, entitled *Transitus Beatae Virginis*, reproduces at the beginning the later Arabic version. In its concluding section it speaks of the assemblies of the angels, and the coming of Moses, Enoch, Elias, and Christ in chariots. Mary's lot after death is then described as follows:

> And they carried the blessed one to Paradise with this glory, and her holy body was placed there. And when she was carried up and reached the gate of Paradise, the sword that surrounds Paradise was taken away, and the holy one went in with glory that is unspeakable into Paradise, the celestials and terrestrials intermingled. And they placed her in boundless light amid the delicious trees of the Paradise of Eden; and they exalted her with glory on which the eye of flesh is not able to gaze. And our Life-giver stretched out His hand and blessed Mary;

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[70] *The Departure of my Lady Mary from the World* 4 (*Ibid.*, 151).

[71] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 279 f.; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 122.

[72] W. Wright, *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament*, pp. 18-24, 24-41.

and He was raised up from beside her to His glorious Father, and His promise is life to all those who believe in Him.[73]

This version, then, does not speak of the resurrection of Mary, but repeats the theme that her body was taken up to an earthly paradise.[74]

The other Syriac version, known as the Nestorian legend, is contained in *The History of the Blessed Virgin*.[75] This work based on the earlier Syriac versions dependent on the Greek of Pseudo-John is probably even later than the tenth century.[76] An indication of the theme of this recension is seen in the words of Christ to Mary:

O my mother, I am about to make thee depart into Paradise until I come at the last day, wherein I shall dissolve the heavens, and shall make the earth to pass away, and wherein I shall bestow good things upon My chosen ones, and inflict punishment upon the wicked. On that day will I make thee to ascend unto Me in My kingdom.[77]

When Mary had delivered her soul unto her Son, straightway Christ took it up with Him to the mansions of light. Then the Apostles buried Mary in the innermost of three caves on the Mount of Olives.[78] Because the Jews were still plotting to burn the corpse, the Apostles removed it from its resting place, and then Christ carried her to paradise and set her in a glorious place. While Mary was still resting in the Paradise of Eden, Christ left the heavens and came and raised Mary up to show her the things of glory and the vision of Gehenna.[79] At the end the account states:

And after these things it came to pass that our Lord took His Mother and brought her back again to the Paradise of Eden, and He made her to die again until the day of the vivification. And sweet smelling scents

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[73] *Transitus Beatae Virginis* (W. Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 40).

[74] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 265, 268, 278; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 121.

[75] E. Budge, *The History of the Blessed Virgin* (Luzac's Semitic Text and Translation Series 5 [London, 1899], 3-168).

[76] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 268, 291; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 124.

[77] *The History of the Blessed Virgin* (E. Budge, *op. cit.*, 112 f.).

[78] *The History of the Blessed Virgin* (*Ibid.*, 114, 118, 121).

[79] *The History of the Blessed Virgin* (*Ibid.*, 123-125, 127-131).

and odours breathed forth from that place, and she was left there until the day wherein He will make her to ascend into the kingdom which He had already shown her.[80]

This version explicitly denies the glorious resurrection of Mary, for the resurrection described is merely temporary. Stress is placed on the translation of the body of Mary to the earthly Paradise. Here it is preserved incorrupt while awaiting the final coming of Christ and the glorious resurrection.[81]

ETHIOPIC, ARABIC AND ARMENIAN ACCOUNTS

A study of the Coptic, Greek, Latin, and early Syriac versions furnishes a good idea of the basic forms of the Assumption in the Apocrypha. For the sake of completeness a resumé is given of the later versions. The Ethiopic recension, which is based on the sixth century Syriac version, states that the soul of Mary was carried to the treasuries of the Father, and that her body was placed in paradise to await the resurrection of the dead.[82] The Arabic version, which does not seem to go beyond the tenth century, is modeled on the same Syriac version. This is enriched with new details and is remarkable for its contradictions and incoherencies. After suppressing the burial of Mary in Gethsemani, it speaks of the translation of Mary's body to paradise. Then it goes on to speak of the burial of Mary in the valley of Josaphat. Thomas, who was not present, was granted the privilege of seeing Mary being carried to heaven by angels. She blessed him and let her cincture fall upon him. On joining the Apostles, in-

[80] *The History of the Blessed Virgin* (*Ibid.*, 131).

[81] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 293; *Studi e Testi* (1944), 126. After narrating the lot of Mary after death, the *History of the Blessed Virgin* adds another story about the Jews who went by night to the tomb to desecrate the body. The account states: "And they went and entered into the cave, and they moved away the stone from the mouth of the cave; and they saw that the cave was filled with a light like that of the sun, and with a smell like unto that of a sweet scent. And they saw the garments in which our Lady Mary had been swathed lying in the midst of the cave, but there was no body in them; and when they saw this they . . . gave glory unto God involuntarily. Cf. E. Budge, *op. cit.*, 132.

[82] M. Chaine, *Apocrypha de Beata Maria Virgine, Liber transmigrationis Mariae* (Corpus scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 40=Scriptores Aethiopici, Prima Series, Versio, 7 [1909], 19-42, esp. 37). Cf. *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 267, 280; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 122.

credulous Thomas spoke very dubiously about Mary's body being in the sepulchre. To remove his doubts, Peter opened the tomb and found it empty. Thomas then related his vision. Despite its inconsistencies, this version at least has the merit of affirming clearly enough the resurrection of Mary.[83] The Armenian account is a very free elaboration of the discourse of John of Thessalonica. It is, therefore, later than the first half of the seventh century, and the probability is that this recension is even much later. This states that angels raised up the body of Mary on a cloud three days after her burial. Then the narrator says: "Whether her soul was united to her body or not I know not; God knows."[84] The writer leaves his audience in suspense regarding the point of the resurrection, imitating in this certain Latin writers of the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century who, as a reaction against apocryphal legends, confessed their ignorance of the Assumption of Mary or suspended their judgment regarding it.[85]

SUMMATION OF THE APOCRYPHAL ACCOUNTS

From a study of those Apocrypha two general conclusions are warranted. The first is that they universally manifest a belief that something extraordinary took place in connection with the death of Mary, that there was a special intervention on the part of God so that Mary's lot in death was different from the general fate of mankind. The second general conclusion is that these Apocrypha in no way present a uniform tradition regarding the nature of this special intervention of God. In some this divine intervention is described as a true Assumption, a glorification of Mary in body and soul entailing her entrance into the glory of heaven; in others the stress is laid on the idea of the translation

[83] M. Enger, *Joannis Apostoli de transitu Beatae Mariae Virginis liber* (Elberfeld, 1854). Cf. *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 265, 286, 280; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 123; F. Robinson, *op. cit.*, xvi. The Thomas theme also plays a part in the later Latin transitus. Cf. C. Tischendorf, *Apocalypses Apocryphae*, pp. 119 ff.; M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 156.

[84] E. Doyethesi, *Neutestamentliche Apocryphen* (Venice, 1898), pp. 450-78; P. Vetter, "Die armenische Dormitio Mariae," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 84 (1902), 321-49. Cf. M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 155 f.

[85] J. Bellamy, "Assomption de la Vièrge," *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique* I (Paris, 1931), 2130.

of the body of Mary to an earthly paradise, while her soul in glory awaits the resurrection of, and reunion with, the incorrupted body on the last day. Some envision the assumption or translation taking place without the body being buried; others postulate first the burial of Mary. Furthermore, there is a vast difference in the time element regarding the assumption or translation. Some postulate it on the day of death without the burial; others place it on the day of death after the burial. Others describe it as taking place three days after the burial. One seems to hint that the glorification of Mary occurred eight days after the death of Mary and the translation of her body. Others state that the glorious assumption of Mary took place only after the lapse of seven months. Almost universally these accounts manifest the belief that the body of Mary did not see corruption. Yet, strange to say, among Coptic narratives, which are generally such strong witnesses for a glorious assumption, there is evidence a belief in the corruption of the body of Mary. The Bohairic account of Theodosius expressly mentions that the body of Mary was reduced to dust like that of other men, and that it was in that state when Christ came to raise it up.[86] This is a manifestation of the belief of the Monophysite faction known as Severines or Theodosians who taught that the corruptibility of the body of Christ and, consequently, of the body of Mary. To confirm their teaching they postulate a long interval between the death and assumption of Mary, during which period corruption could set in. The institution of the double feast of the *Dormito* and the Assumption, separated by a long interval, can probably be regarded as an importation of the Monophysites. This double liturgical celebration, although grounded on an untenable theory, is a clear manifestation of the belief in the Assumption among the Copts who showed the good taste of keeping silent about the dissolution of the body of Mary.[87]

[86] *Bohairic Accounts of the Falling Asleep of Mary* II, 8 (F. Robinson, *Coptic Apocryphal Gospels*, 121).

[87] M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 29 (1930), 269 f.; *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 132, 297-300; "Monophysite (Eglise Copte), dogme et croyances," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 10 (Paris, 1929), 2279; G. Bardy, "Sévère d'Antioche," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* 14 (Paris, 1941), 1988; K. Bihlmeyer, *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 259. Another viewpoint to be kept in mind is seen in one of the reasons given for the death of Mary in the account of Theodosius. Christ is

EVALUATION OF THE ASSUMPTION NARRATIVES

In order to arrive at an appreciation and evaluation of these assumption narratives, one must study them in their context. They must be viewed against the background of the entire theme of the *Transitus Mariae*. Such a study shows that the assumption narrative is secondary and almost incidental. On the whole, the principal emphasis of the *Transitus Mariae* is on the death and burial of Mary, subjects which are dressed up with fantastic details. In general, the *Transitus* is the setting for a decidedly bizarre and graphic eschatology. Then, at the end, in a somewhat summary manner, is added a section dealing with the assumption or translation of Mary. In comparison with the rest of the document this epilogue is relatively short.[88]

These assumption narratives, often fantastic, inconsistent, and contradictory, are obviously not reliable witnesses to the actual fact of the Assumption in the manner in which the Gospels are reliable historical documents attesting the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. Despite their open claim to be the work of the Apostles or eyewitnesses, the Apocrypha fail in one of the purposes for which they were written, namely, the conveyance or presentation of true history. From the historical point of view, if at times they bear witness to the currency of a tradition, there is other and better evidence to support it.[89]

Cutting through the maze of discrepancies and contradictions, and disregarding the "translation theme," one finds in the Apocrypha a tradition bearing witness to a genuine Assumption, that is, the glorification of Mary in body and soul. Nevertheless, these apocryphal accounts *alone*, and *by themselves*, are not the basis of the Catholic belief in the Assumption of the Blessed

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pictured as saying to Mary: "I did not wish to suffer thee to taste death, but to translate thee to the heavens as Enoch and Elias. And if this happens to thee, wicked men will say concerning thee, that thou art a power which came down from heaven; and that this dispensation took place in appearance." Cf. F. Robinson, *Coptic Apocryphal Gospels*, 109.

[88] H. Jürgens, "Die kirchliche überlieferung von der leiblichen Aufnahme der seligsten Gottesmutter in den Himmel," *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 4 (1880), 602; M. Jugie, *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 15, 301.

[89] M. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. xii; A. Vitti, "Libri apocryphi de assumptione," *Verbum Domini* 6 (1926), 225; M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 103, 167.

Virgin. Moreover, it is completely false to assert that the belief in the Assumption developed solely from the Aporcrypha.[90]

It has been remarked that the Apocrypha fail in their purpose of reporting true history, that the assumption narratives are not reliable witnesses attesting an actual historical happening. Nevertheless, the value of the Apocrypha must not be minimized or made light of. They are extremely valuable sources for conveying a knowledge of the customs and practices of the times, for furnishing an insight into the opinions, doctrines, and beliefs of the faithful and of the various sects.[91] In this regard the assumption narratives are reliable proofs of historical value attesting the Christian belief in the Assumption at the time of the composition of these works. As such they are echoes of Christian thought.[92]

As we seen above, this account of the Assumption in the Apocrypha can be traced back certainly to the end of the fifth century. An interesting problem is to see if there existed an antecedent source on which the Apocrypha could draw. This, some see in the oral tradition of the Church going back to the Apostles. This opinion maintains that the authors of these works did not invent the fact of the Assumption, but merely embellished it with legendary details. They maintain that the fact was already known in the Church and that the apocryphal accounts are merely witnesses to the oral tradition going back to the Apostles.[93] Others, stating categorically that the belief is not derived from the Apocrypha, and stressing the expansion of the belief in Catholic circles in the sixth and seventh centuries, argue that this belief must go back to the Apostles by way of oral tradition.[94] Granting the possibility and the probability of some oral tradition going back to the Apostles, and notably to St. John, there are many difficulties in the way of an appeal to it. The tradition, whatever there was of it, was obscured and not of general knowl-

[90] E. Renan, *Histoire des origines du christianisme* VI (Paris, 1879), 513.

[91] J. Frey, "De libris apocryphis," *Institutiones Biblicae* I, 145; A. Vitti, *Verbum Domini* 6 (1926), 225; M. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, p. xiii.

[92] M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 103, 170; H. Jürgens, *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 4 (1880), 641.

[93] H. Jürgens, *Ibid.*

[94] J. Bellamy, "Assomption de la Vierge," *Dictionnaire de theologie catholique* I, 2136; J. Pohle-A. Preuss, *Mariology* (St. Louis, 1926), pp. 108, 109, 114.

edge as is evidenced by the variations on the subject of Mary's death. Epiphanius, a Palestinian writing at the end of the fourth century, sums up the various opinions and says that no one knows whether Mary died and was buried, whether she died a martyr, or whether she remained immortal. Moreover, there are difficulties in the way of an appeal of to the Apocrypha as testimonies to an apostolic tradition. Passing over their contradictions in details, it is noted that they are not in agreement on the capital point of Mary's resurrection. Their variant stress of a true assumption on the one hand and a mere translation on the other is a stress not of something accidental and secondary, but of something essential and primary. Consequently they cannot be regarded as testimonies to an oral primitive tradition that is explicit and continuous.[95]

An attempt has also been made to seek former evidence of the Assumption in the patristic tradition of the first five centuries. In 1926, after a study of this period, M. Jugie thought that he found testimonies that were relatively satisfying, affirmations which were independent of the Apocrypha, thus showing that the first five centuries were not silent on the glorious mystery that terminated the life of Mary.[96] His views and conclusions were questioned and criticised.[97] In his most recent study of the same period, he states that he has not discovered any absolutely clear and explicit testimony on the glorious Assumption of Mary in the sense in which it is understood in Catholic theology.[98]

It must be borne in mind that it is not necessary to postulate either an oral apostolic tradition or a patristic tradition for an explanation of the assumption narratives in the Apocrypha. Prior to the composition of these works much was known about the Blessed Mother. It was known that Mary was the Mother of Christ, the Mother of the Saviour, the virgin Mother of God. As

[95] M. Jugie, *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 585-589, 609-612. For a study of Epiphanius' views, cf. *ibid.*, 77-81.

[96] M. Jugie, "La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vièrge dans la tradition des cinq premiers siècles," *Echos d'Orient* 25 (1926), 5-26, 129-143, 281-307.

[97] F. Cavallera, "A propos d'une enquête patristique sur l'assomption," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* (1926), 97-116; J. Rivière, "Questions mariales d'actualité," *Revue des sciences religieuses* 12 (1936), 77-82.

[98] M. Jugie, *La mort et l'assomption de la Sainte Vièrge: Etude historico-doctrinale* (*Studi e Testi* 114 [Vatican city, 1944], 101).

such she was hailed as full of grace and blessed among women. Moreover, Mary was associated with Christ in a very special manner. With Christ, the second Adam, Mary was, in early Christian thought, the new Eve. The definition at Ephesus (431) of the revealed doctrine that Mary was the Mother of God exercised considerable influence on the development of Marial theology, and on the already growing cult of Mary in the liturgy. This solemn declaration was the occasion of focusing the attention of the world on the great dignity which the Divine Maternity conferred upon Mary.[99] Christian piety then arrived at a greater consciousness of what was involved in, and flowed from, Mary's outstanding privileges. They saw that she who was a special and extraordinary person in life was a special and extraordinary person in death. They realized that her lot in death must be different from that of ordinary mortals. They reasoned that Christ who took flesh of Mary would not abandon the body of his Mother to the ignominy of the grave, that this was repugnant to Christ and to Mary whom He had so dignified and exalted. It is precisely after this Council that these Apocrypha began to appear and a theme running through these various works is Mary's victory over death and the grave. The "holy and precious body" of Mary shared in the triumph of Christ. Among the solutions arrived at is that of a glorious Assumption. Nor is there any need of hesitating to admit that this explicit affirmation first manifested itself in the Apocrypha, as though this were a terrifying word. As we know these works now, they were written by Catholics as well as by Monophysites, and love and veneration of the *Theotokos* was a characteristic mark of both groups.[100]

Thus the explicit affirmation of an assumption could very well find its first expression in this apocryphal literature. Radically, however, it was based on the complexus of Mary's dignities and privileges as made known by revelation. Significantly enough, it was a fifth century writer, Vincent of Lerins, who spoke of development of this kind as being organic, vital, and living, like the growth and development of a plant or the human body.[101]

Yet the Apocrypha alone are not sufficient to explain the

[99] *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 81, 169.

[100] *Ibid.*, 169-171.

[101] *Commonitorium* 23 (*MPL* 50, 668).

Catholic belief in the Assumption. These works represent Christian piety coming to a greater consciousness of what flowed from Mary's God-given privileges regarding her lot in death. Their solution of the problem is not at all uniform. Among the leading solutions is that of a true Assumption on the one hand, and that of a mere translation of the virginal body to an earthly paradise on the other. Those who stress unduly the importance of the Apocrypha seem to disregard this patent diversity. If they trace Catholic belief solely to the Apocrypha, then they should postulate among Catholics a belief in the mere translation of the body of Mary. Thus the problem is posed: why did the translation theory fall by the wayside, and the assumption theory grow with the centuries? This brings up the historical development of the belief through the centuries where it is seen that Catholic tradition gradually came to adhere solely to the belief in the Assumption, and discarded the theory of a mere translation.[102] Consequently, together with the explicit affirmation in some Apocrypha, there must be linked the tradition of the Church. This represents a process whereby the Church (both the *Ecclesia docens* and *discens*), founded by Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, comes to a clearer and more explicit consciousness of what they believe is contained in something revealed by God. This process is still going on. Whether the Assumption is a belief of Catholics hallowed by the ages and centuries, or whether it is a belief that is contained definitely, formally, but implicitly in the deposit of revelation the Church to this day has not decided.

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[102] *Studi e Testi* 114 (1944), 169.

MISSION INTENTION

"Unity of East and West through Christian Principles" is the Mission Intention for the month of January, 1947.

A TOWERING CEDAR ON LEBANON

Word went out recently from the Holy See inviting the bishops of the whole world to inquire into the belief of the faithful in regard to the Assumption of Our Lady into heaven. Since then, learned men are busy searching "the mind of the Church" and rendering their expert opinion. Under these circumstances, it may not be uninteresting to offer a brief devotional explanation of the Mass appointed for the feast of the Assumption. *Lex orandi, lex credendi.*

INTROIT

"Let us all rejoice in the Lord as we celebrate the festive day under the auspices of Blessed Mary the Virgin: because of her Assumption, the angels hold jubilee and, in chorus, praise the Son of God. Ps. *44: 2. My heart wells forth a noble song: I chant my master poem to the King."*

The Assumption is the last arc in the circle of Our Lady's festivals, or, to take a metaphor from today's Epistle, a lofty, stately, towering cedar from the heights of which we look down—and see many things. The Assumption explains her Immaculate Conception, her Annunciation, her whole life. When we know, as we do today, what Mary was destined to be and what heights she was to attain, we have the secret of all the divine favors showered upon her. The end of her career throws light on its beginning. And yet, in a strictly theological point of view, the central event in her life—the one toward which all her earlier visitations of heaven converged and to which all later graces are mere corollaries—is her Divine Motherhood. But the Church here takes a more popular view when she invites us in today's Epistle to regard her Assumption as the crowning grace which, like a lofty arc light, sheds a golden splendor upon her whole life. All is well that ends well.

Mary was intimately associated with Jesus, She was His Mother by her deliberate consent; but it was not God's will that she should take an active part in the Redemption while this was still in the making.[1] But once the Redemption was accomplished,

[1] I am not, of course, unmindful of her important contribution at the foot of the Cross. Nor do I wish by the broad statement above to disregard the

the whole economy of salvation, was, as it were, turned over to her. Mary did not lay the foundation of the kingdom of God on earth, as did her Divine Son; she did not have to "bear the whole day's burden and scorching heat" in evangelizing the world, as did the apostles. Of these things she was a distant, though interested, observer. But once the labor of building the house was done, she took possession of it as the Mother, the Queen, the Universal Intercessor of God's family. She is, in a word, the Mediatrix, the Universal Dispenser, of all the treasure of graces earned by her Son. This truth is stressed again and again in the Mass of the Assumption.

It is obvious, then, why the Introit strikes a note of joy: "Gaudeamus omnes."[2] It is a universal joy, in which the militant and the triumphant Church join hands. The expression "in Domino" is appropriately chosen to give our joy the right accent. It recalls St. Paul's favorite expression "in Christ." We celebrate Mary's festival "in union with God," "as members of God's family," just as the angels rejoice "to praise the Son of God." Ultimately all our acts have but one end, to glorify God. Mary herself would disdain any homage shown her if it did not tend to the glory of God. Moreover, we celebrate "sub honore beatae Mariae Virginis," an expression which is but feebly rendered "in honor of Mary," and which Fr. Martindale more aptly renders: "under the high title of Blessed Mary Virgin." This is only one of the numerous instances in which the Latin is superior to English. When we speak of someone being "*in* a cave," a Roman could say "*sub* antro," conceiving the cave as a sort of shelter "under which" the person has taken refuge. So here: we celebrate "safely sheltered under the honor" paid to Mary. In honoring Mary we are safe. It has always been the conviction of the Church that true devotion to Mary is a mark of predestination.

The Introit closes with a verse from the Hebrew Marriage Song, Psalm 44, parts of which are often applied by the Liturgy to Christ and His Blessed Mother. In the mind of the Church, many Old Testament texts which speak directly of Christ can be

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fine-spun distinctions touching her part as "coredemptrix." See the excellent treatise by Thom. J. Motherway, S.J., "Mary, Mediatrix of all Graces," in *Review for Religious*, May, 1945, 163 ff.

[2] This Introit, or parts of it, are also used in other Masses.

rightly used in an accommodated sense of His Mother. A conspicuous example of this freedom of quotation is the Epistle of today. In the verse just quoted, the Psalmist is aware that he is engaged in composing an extraordinary hymn and so, by way of *prolusio*, he encourages himself to put forth his best effort: "My heart wells forth a noble song: I chant my master poem[3] to the King," and, we may add, to His Queen.

COLLECT

"Let us pray: The sins of Thy servants forgive, we beg, O Lord, that we who are powerless to please Thee by any acts of our own, may be saved by the intercession of the Mother of Thy Son, Our Lord."

This Collect is somewhat puzzling. We might have had a joyful reference to the fact of the Assumption as in the Introit. If we knew more about the occasion and other circumstances of its composition, we could, perhaps, account for the omission. However, Introits and Collects are not governed by the same rule. In the former the Church often takes a rapturous flight, while in the latter she is generally intensely practical. Mary is assumed into heaven. She is anxious that we, too, should reach the goal. The only obstacle in the way is sin. Small wonder, then, that she is invoked to obtain for us what we "by our own unaided efforts" cannot obtain. Note the vigorous "non valemus": we simply "have no strength" to do it. So, after all, there is a reference to her Assumption, for it is in consequence of it that her intercessory power is seen in all its glory. Now that she is in heaven, she wields it with sovereign freedom. It will again be mentioned in the Secret Prayer and in the Postcommunion. Note, also, that the "non valemus" was perhaps intended as a gentle hint to Mary—though she did not need it—that she, too, being a creature, was "unable" to accomplish anything in the supernatural order. The hint, therefore, if hint it is, is intended for us: it puts Mary, so to speak, on a level with ourselves. Let us confidently approach her: if she could, by the grace of God, attain such heights, then we, too, can by the same powerful grace attain at least lesser heights

[3] I am glad to see that we are at last rid of the old "dico ego *opera* mea Regi," and, by consequence, of the ungainly "I speak my works to the King." It should be noted, however, that *opus* (like the Greek ἔργον) is the technical word for "work of art." See the writer's paper, "*Ergon* in the Gospels," in *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, January, 1944, 61 ff.

in the kingdom of God. There is another reference to her state as a creature in the Secret Prayer. Note, finally, that here our salvation ("ut salvemur") is ascribed to Mary's intercession.

EPISTLE

"To be with all, I sought a haven of rest, and in the inheritance of the Lord do I wish to abide.[4] *Then the Creator of the universe laid an express command on me, and my Creator*[5] *assigned me a tabernacle for my rest. He said to me, 'In Jacob shall be thy dwelling, and in Israel thy inheritance, and in the midst of my elect strike root.' And thus I am established in Sion, and in the Holy City likewise I rest,*[6] *and in Jerusalem is my domain. And I have taken root in an honored people, and in the portion of my God, His inheritance, and in the full assembly of the saints is my lasting abode. I am like a towering cedar on Lebanon, and like a cypress on Mount Sion. Like a palm tree in Cades I rise aloft, and like a rose plantation in Jericho. Like a graceful olive tree in the fields I am, and like a towering plane tree on the highway by running brooks. Like cinnamon and aromatic balsam I give out fragrance, and like a choice myrrh I exhale a sweet aroma."*

The Epistle of today is one of the most fragrant selections from the Old Testament: chapter 24, vv. 11-13 and 15-20, of Ecclesiasticus ("The Preacher"). It introduces a soliloquy of the Eternal Wisdom, which, in the general Catholic interpretation, is none other than Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, the Logos of St. John's Prologue, "the mind of the Father" in Ignatius's letter to the Ephesians. In eternity He had come forth "out of the mouth of the Most High," and now that He is to become Man, He looks over the vast creation to find a fixed abode, a tabernacle, a haven of rest, for it was always His delight to be with the children of men (*Prov.* 8:31). And since He never acted without the approval

[4] The Greek here is more expressive. The Eternal Wisdom asks: "And in whose inheritance shall I dwell?"

[5] There is here some confusion in the text. The Missal has a comma after "qui creavit," and joins the pronoun *me* with what follows, thus giving *requievit* a causative sense. Others take *requievit* in its usual intransitive sense: "He Who created me rested in My tabernacle." But this does not fit the context.

[6] Here and later in the same passage the Latin perfect (as representing the Greek aorist of the perfect) is often best rendered by a present, the stress being on what now "is," and not on what "came to be."

of the Father (*John* 6:38), He obeyed His Father's command and took up His abode among the people which was God's special portion and inheritance (*Ps.* 77:71). The Gospels tell the rest of the story. And what would the New Testament be without the "towering," the all-dominating, figure of Christ? The latter part of the Epistle is a description of His loveliness and majesty.

But why this Epistle on this day? Today "assumpta est Maria in caelum," and the devout composer of the Mass is looking through the Old Testament for a suitable symbol of the event. We are not surprised that the expression "exaltata sum" caught his eager eye. This, I fancy, was the immediate occasion for choosing this selection. No doubt, there were other reasons for the choice. Mary is now in heaven, and there she has at last found "a haven of rest"; there she is surrounded by "the full assembly of the saints"; there is her "Sion," her beloved "Jerusalem." I believe, however, that "the chosen people" and "God's special inheritance" should be given a wider sense, including the Church on earth as well as that in heaven. Among us, at any rate, Mary has taken firm root; among us her privileges are unreservedly acknowledged; among us, in the bosom of the Church, she exhales a sweet aroma. One lesson to be gathered from the Epistle should be our resolve to help Mary to attain the full measure of her "blessedness" (*Luke* 1:48).

GRADUAL AND ALLELUIA

"To establish truth and gentleness and holiness, may thy right arm conduct thee wondrously! Listen, my daughter, and see and incline thy ear, for the King is greatly enamored of thy beauty. Alleluia, alleluia. Assumed into heaven is Mary: the angelic hosts hold jubilee, alleluia."

The Gradual is made up of vv. 5, 11, and 12, of Psalm 44, the inspired Marriage Song. The opening words are addressed to Christ the King and Divine Bridegroom. The Psalmist wishes Him to go forward and establish a reign of truth and gentleness and holiness in the world. The words "and gentleness" are not in the original; yet they are an appropriate addition. St. Paul expressly speaks of "the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (*II Cor.* 10:1). The word "holiness" is meant to eliminate the much-abused "justice" and the still worse "righteousness" (*iustitia*, *δικαιοσύνη*), which occur hundreds of times in our translations

of the Bible.[7] The second sentence is an exhortation to the Bride to give herself wholeheartedly to her Divine Lover. The angels rejoice in seeing this heavenly bridal couple.

The application to Mary on the day of her Assumption is obvious. Now that she is in heaven, we wish her to go forward and establish in the world, and first of all in our own hearts, a reign of truth and gentleness and holiness. Mary is interested in the truth about her Divine Son; her power is exerted with a gentle hand; her willingness to help us on the way to holiness is undoubted. Her mighty arm extends far and wide. Should we not, then, give Mary an opportunity to do "mighty things" for us? The reference to her powerful intercession is again obvious.

GOSPEL

"At that time, Jesus came to a certain village where a woman called Martha offered Him the hospitality of her house. This woman had a sister named Mary, who actually seated herself at the Lord's feet to listen to His discourse. Meanwhile Martha was all in a flutter, trying to provide ample cheer for the guests. So she confronted Him and said: 'Lord, is it no concern to you that my sister leaves me all alone to prepare the meal? Tell her, therefore, to lend me a helping hand.' By way of answer Jesus said to her: 'Martha, Martha, you are fretting and greatly disturbing yourself about many things. But one thing is necessary. Mary has made the best choice,[8] and this must not be taken away from her.' "

The Gospel of this day is the idyllic scene depicted by St. Luke with such vivid detail, Our Lord's visit to Bethany in the house of Lazarus. The Church's intention in selecting this pericope is evident. "But one thing is necessary," Our Lord said calmly to the excited Martha. Her bustling activity in accommodating the

[7] If the reader interested in Bible translation is looking for a treat, I would advise him to note all the texts in the New Testament where the word δικαιοσύνη is used and see how Monsignor Knox has translated them in readable English. We are at last able to read the New Testament in a modern translation that reproduces the *sense* intended by the sacred writers. See "Impressions of Monsignor Knox's New Testament," in *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, April, 1945, 241 ff.

[8] The words "the best choice" are a rendering of the Vulgate's "optimam partem." The Greek reads differently: τὴν ἀγαθὴν μερίδα: "the good, proper, profitable part," which implies that Martha's part was not good at all—under the circumstances.

distinguished guests is admirable, and it is not this that Our Lord censured. But Martha needed a lesson, quite apart from her use of disrespectful language: first things come first, and when Jesus is present to explain the Word of God, it is a duty to listen. When a woman in the crowd cried out aloud, "Blessed the womb that has borne you! Blessed the breasts that have suckled you!" He corrected her: "Blessed, rather, are those who hear the Word of God and observe it!" Today Mary has risen to unusual heights in heaven because she obeyed the Word of God when it was made known to her (*Luke* 1:45), and because she listened to the inward voice of the Holy Spirit who led her on to consummate holiness. Twice in the story of the Infancy, St. Luke records the fact that "Mary treasured all these incidents and meditated on them in heart and mind." This is the secret of Mary's growth in holiness and of her present power as our official Intercessor.

OFFERTORY

"*Assumed into heaven is Mary: the angels hold jubilee and, in chorus, bless the Lord. Alleluia.*"

The common belief in Mary's bodily Assumption is here as well as in the Alleluia vigorously brought out by the opening words: "Assumpta est." There, as well as here, the exultant joy of the angels is set down as a result of the great event.

SECRET PRAYER

"*May the prayer of the Mother of God come to the aid of Thy people, O Lord;*[9] *for, although we know that, subject to the liability of human nature, she has departed this life, may we nevertheless experience her intercession for us with Thee in celestial glory.*"

Cardinal Schuster senses a "difficulty" on the part of the composer of this Mass "in explaining the fact of the death of Mary. How could she who had been conceived without sin and had given birth to the Author of life Himself, undergo death?" "This," he

[9] The rendering of the first sentence is feeble, compared with the Latin, where "subveniat" leaps to the head of it. Perhaps a paraphrase will illustrate the difficulty: "Come to the aid of Thy people, O Lord, and hear the prayer of the Mother of God." Students of the Liturgy should be acquainted with Fr. Martindale's books, *The Mind of the Missal*, and *The Words of the Missal*, (Macmillan: 1929 and 1932), and with Sr. Gonzaga Haessly's *Rhetoric in the Sunday Collects of the Roman Missal* (Cleveland: Ursuline College, 1938).

says, "is the theological difficulty." But the answer is not far to seek. Mary could not undergo death as a penalty of sin; if she nevertheless entered her glory through the gates of death, this is no doubt due to a positive decree of God who willed that in this respect she should resemble her Son. Adam and Eve before the fall were immune from death and, in general, the miseries of life. Like them were Jesus, the second Adam, and Mary, the second Eve. Jesus was immune from death and other ills by reason of the Hypostatic Union, Mary because of her Immaculate Conception. But just as Jesus, for the purposes of the Redemption, was subject to many of the consequences of original sin, so Mary bore her share of them by the positive will of God. His *passio* was to be matched by her *com-passio.* At the same time, we are fond of thinking that her passing out of this world was painless. No doubt, she quietly closed her eyes to this life only to open them, in the same instant, to the Beatific Vision.

Perhaps the expression "pro condicione carnis" deserves a little comment. The preposition "pro" causes no difficulty, meaning "in accordance with," an expression that readily shades over into the sense "because of." It seems to imply a certain "fitness of things." As to the word "condicio," it is not so easy to understand its connotation in particular contexts. A glance at the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* shows the wide range of this difficult word. In the Preface for the Dead, we meet it in a context that resembles its use in the present Mass: what saddens us is "certa moriendi condicio": "the certain possibility, eventuality, of death," "the certain liability to death." Similarly here: Mary died "owing to the liability to the ills that flesh is heir to." Man, composed of body and soul, is essentially liable to the breaking up of this union, unless, as here, the positive will of God stays the course of nature. This is man's condition; this his nature. Fr. Martindale offers this excellent rendering: "because of her human state"; but I doubt whether we should supply "eius" after "carnis."

COMMUNION VERSE

"Mary has made the best choice, and this must not be taken away from her."

Again we are reminded of Mary's silent growth in personal holiness, which eventually led to her Assumption and glory in

heaven. Her daily life resembled "cinnamon and aromatic balsam." At Nazareth, within her immediate surroundings, and now within the Church, she exhales a fragrant odor. If we couple this thought with that expressed in the Epistle for the Vigil of the Assumption (*Eccl.* 24: 23-31), we have a perfect picture of the quiet life of Nazareth, only once, so far as we know, slightly disturbed (*Mark* 3:21), and only once almost dashed to pieces by the rude experiences under the Cross. But even then the essential inward sweetness of intimate union with her Son was not broken.

POSTCOMMUNION

"Let us pray: Having been made partakers of the heavenly Banquet, we implore Thy clemency, O Lord our God, that we, who honor the Assumption of the Mother of God, may, by her intercession, be delivered from all ills that threaten us."

As usual, the Postcommunion contains a reference to Holy Communion. But what is important for understanding the spirit of today's Mass is the fact that once again Mary's intercessory powers are invoked so that "we may be freed from all ills" and eventually admitted to the happiness of heaven. Our confidence in Mary should know no bounds, least of all when we approach her with her Divine Son in our breasts. What might we not obtain from Mary if we had but implicit confidence in her!

Mary's intercession, by the way, does not merely consist in her telling Our Lord our needs in so many *words;* rather, she supports her request with all the weight of her authority—her sanctity, her being the Mother of God, and above all, her office of Universal Intercessor and Universal Dispenser. In these respects, her position in heaven is unique. In the Collect for the Mass on All Saints' Day, we plead for help "through the *multiplied* intercessions" of all the saints. We rely on the number of our pleaders. In today's Mass, we lean exclusively on the merits of the Mother of God. Quality is what counts here, not quantity.

CONCLUSION

In closing these brief reflections on the Mass of the Assumption, I feel that I should beg the reader to eke them out by his own knowledge of the various Masses in honor of Mary. There, as he reads these devotional outpourings of the Church, he will realize that "gloriosa dicta sunt de te, Maria." And so, strengthened by

the new title to a hearing, if it is granted by the Holy See, let us go to Mary and be unwearied in testing her intercessory power by saying with more fervor than ever: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for *us sinners* now and at the hour of our death. Amen." Above all, let us pray that God may hasten the day when the contemplated honor is bestowed upon the Queen of all Saints.

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FIFTY YEARS AGO

In the January, 1897, issue of *The American Ecclesiastical Review,* the opening article, intended as the beginning of a series, discusses the object, the promulgation, and the binding forces of the decrees of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, held in 1884. The anonymous author complains that a considerable number of these decrees have remained a dead letter. . . . Abbé Hogan, continuing his series of articles on Clerical Studies, treats of Church History. He declares that there are hundreds of priests throughout our land who could become experts in this field with the aid of comparatively few books. . . . The first instalment of a lengthy article (translated from the *Civiltà Cattolica),* by the Rev. C. M. Brandi, S.J., entitled "The Pontifical Declaration of the Invalidity of Anglican Orders," provides an interesting and instructive commentary on Leo XIII's Bull *Apostolicae curae,* issued Sept. 13, 1896. After pointing out that the "Protestant" members of the Anglican Church are quite in accord with the Pope's assertion that the English Reformers wished to reject the priesthood in the Catholic sense, the author goes on to narrate, in refutation of the "Catholic" group, the historical background of the decision—the mutilation of the ancient Pontifical for the compilation of the Edwardine Ordinal, and the unchanging attitude of the Catholic Church from the very beginning, judging Anglican Orders to be null and void. . . . The Conference section contains the answer to a question as to the infallible character of Pope Leo's decision on Anglican Orders. In both question and answer it seems to be taken for granted that this decision, since it was not directly concerned with a revealed doctrine, was not an infallible pronouncement, and in the reply it is asserted that theoretically a reopening of the question is possible, though practically the decision admits no appeal or reversal. (It should be remembered that doctrines which are not revealed, but are connected with revealed truths—as is the factual aspect of the controversy on Anglican Orders—can be the object of an infallible decision, as secondary or indirect matter of the Church's magisterium.) F.J.C.

PARATROOPER PADRE

[Editor's Note: *This is a continuation of the story of Fr. Francis Sampson, Chaplain of the 101st Airborne Division in World War II, made up of excerpts from letters he wrote to members of his family. The second installment, which appeared in the December, 1946, issue of this* Review, *ended with his capture by the Germans at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.*]

PART III: THE ROAD TO STALAG II-A

A German lieutenant got into the car, and told me to keep driving down to the bottom of the hill, where there was a little town. The German soldiers there reminded me of a pack of rats. They had broken into a little warehouse, and they were dragging stuff out, and would smash canned goods on the cement to see if they wanted them or not. They had broken into the school and came out with musical instruments, and were blowing on them and beating the drums. The lieutenant started questioning me, but I told him my name, rank and serial number and said that that was all I could tell him. He seemed like a decent fellow and didn't press it any further. He went away for a bit, I presumed to call his CP about my capture. When he went the soldiers started after the stuff in my jeep. They threw out the medical equipment, chaplain Engle's communion set which I tried to rescue but was prevented, our duffle bags, *etc.* I was glad that I had left my Mass kit in the aid station. Then they got the box of cookies my Aunt Millie had sent me for Christmas, and that really did go against the grain, for it had taken considerable self-control to save those cookies for Christmas.

Then, a mule-faced boorish type German soldier grabbed my arm and yanked my wrist-watch off. I told him that I was a priest and an American captain and asked for it back, but he just laughed. A couple of soldiers began to argue with him, in my behalf I gathered, but without success. So I began yelling for a German officer as loudly as I could. The fellow started going away but I followed him still yelling. Finally, with what I took for German profanity, he handed my watch back. (That is lesson number 1 in dealing with German soldiers—yell at them, scream at them, get red in the face, distend your neck muscles, and be

flushed with anger. Modesty and meekness never work. They will walk all over the humble man.) The lieutenant came back and assigned my driver and me to ride in a half-track which they had captured from the Americans.

The fifteen most miserable days I have ever spent on earth then began rather favorably. The three Germans in the half-track were young, and seemingly quite decent boys. We rode for five hours. One of the Germans could speak some English and told me all about his family. He and one of the other Germans were Catholic and all three very respectful. Since I couldn't be sure that they were not after information I let them do all the talking. They talked about everything, using the English-speaking boy as interpreter. I was amazed at their ignorance of the real issues of the war. On our way back to their rear we passed miles and miles of German armored vehicles and tanks and lots of our equipment which they had captured and were using. This was the line, I later discovered, which surrounded Bastogne, and demanded that the 101st surrender. Our General McAuliffe became famous with his "Nuts" reply. General McAuliffe is a Catholic and a very good one too.

At some little town in the middle of the night my driver and I were let out to join a group of other Americans who had been taken prisoner, and were marching to the rear. We stopped briefly to be interrogated by a German Intelligence Officer. Then we marched until two a.m., when we were herded into a filthy barn in a little town. We remained there that night and the following day, and despite my pounding on the door demanding water and food, we received none. I was the only officer in the group and consequently had to try to keep morale up and discipline, for lack of these things give the German interrogators the opening they want. About eleven p.m. the second night a German Intelligence Officer came out and called for me. He said that he hadn't known that there was an officer in the group (which I knew was a lie), and that I would have received better treatment. He started his interrogation, and when I told that name, rank and serial number was all I could give as he well knew, he then proceeded to tell me all about my outfit. My jeep had our Regiment number printed on it. He told me a bit of the history of the 101st Division, and who our CO was. (He was a couple months behind on that—didn't know that the CO he named had been killed in Holland.)

After he had interrogated the rest of the men, he called me back in, saying he couldn't sleep and would like to talk with me. He offered me coffee, but I said that I should like some very much if he were offering it to all the men with me, that I considered it very unfair treatment of Americans not to give them any food or water for nearly thirty-six hours. He regretted that no supplies or provisions had come through for them—we were too close to the front. He assured me that at our next stop we would be well fed—a German lie that was to get very monotonous during the next two weeks. At least, I insisted, he could get some bread and water for the men, which he finally and reluctantly did.

For three hours until dawn the interrogator amazed me with the strangest monologue I have ever listened to. He had been a merchant in Hamburg, has a family and delighted in showing me a hundred or more pictures of his wife and children, relatives, friends, *etc.* He spoke of the position of the Church in Germany—that it was the only stable and sensible organization in the world, and especially in the Fatherland. He himself had been surprised at the German break-through, but was convinced that it would peter out in a couple of weeks. He knew as all sensible Germans knew that Germany was beaten and had lost the war when she was driven out of Africa. America was more civilized than Germany, but Germany was more cultured than America. England was the real cause of the war, Russia the real menace to future civilization. Germans are home-loving, kindly, and unwarlike people, but the Nazi regime was ambitious—insanely so. Germany might have won the war, had its stupid leaders been content with Austria, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, *etc.*, and had they invaded England, which could have been done without great losses, and had Russia been left alone until England was defeated. Then a comparison of the various religions of the world, *etc.*, *etc.* All this without asking me any questions or with any apparent effort to draw me out. I didn't get it. He finished by telling me that he was sick of war, and that he would be executed if the Gestapo knew what he had told me.

In the morning we started to march again . . . no breakfast. We stopped late that night at a rear area supply depot, and were given each a cold boiled potato and a little green apple. We slept in a tiny church, and were crowded enough to keep fairly warm. Again no breakfast the following morning, marched until dark—

no dinner and no supper. We stayed in a barn where 400 other American prisoners were already cramped together trying to keep warm. That day American planes had come over in thousands—you can't imagine what a sight it was. We passed a German column moving up to the front, and as we did some P-47's began to strafe the column. Following our guards we dashed into the woods, and skirted the road for the next several miles. What a beautiful job those planes did—one after another vehicle would go up in flames and the German casualties were so great that we began to fear German reprisal action. We had walked from Belgium, all the way across Luxembourg, and on the 24th of December we walked (without breakfast or dinner) to Prüm in Germany. We were herded (800 of us by now) into the upstairs auditorium of a school where Hitler's and Goering's pictures covered the front wall. We were told that we were going to be fed—supper was being prepared now. We sort of expected that even the Germans would remember that this was Christmas eve. Our supper consisted of one half boiled turnip and a cup of warm water—nothing else. The men were in a mood to riot. I suggested to the colonel in charge (American colonel) that I hold service. It was a pitch-black night and the city was being bombed all night long (I hadn't known before that our fighter planes bombed at night). The Germans had placed us in the most dangerous place in the city—even a near-miss would collapse the building. We sang *Silent Night* with the roar of planes overhead and bombs dropping very close. I said a prayer, and then spoke for about a half hour on the idea that Christ is always where He is least expected to be—that He is just as surely among us tonight as He was in the manger in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago. Though we may be thousands of miles from home, in enemy hands, cold and hungry—we have that which makes Christmas Christmas, and He stretches forth His infant hand to each of us tonight as we kneel to adore Him.

Christmas Day we were given one slice of bread as we started on our way—no dinner and no supper. We marched about twenty miles to the town of Gerolstein. There was a group of 700 Americans about an hour ahead of us. All 1500 of us were pushed into a two-story building. But just before we went in American bombers came overhead. We prayed that they would keep on going and just as we thought they had passed us up without any

unwelcome Christmas gift we heard the terrifying whistle of bombs falling. We hit the ground, just as the most terriffic blasts you can imagine bounced us up in the air. They hit about 200 yards away but flying debris killed 8 and a direct hit on the group a couple hundred yards ahead of me killed, I believe about 30 of our men and wounded others. Some of the bombs hit the local hospital in which we had several Americans. The Germans sent the wounded Americans down to our building, and although we were so packed in that we couldn't budge, let alone sit or lie down, we had to make room for a hundred wounded. I shall never forget it—the filth and misery of the place. A lieutenant with his leg blown off just below the hip told us to take care of the other men first. Our aid men had practically nothing left to care for the wounded, and the Germans laughed at requests. A number of men were sent out to clean up the bombed city, and they were abused unmercifully.

We were given nothing to eat that night, or the next morning, or the next afternoon. We were allowed out one at a time—1500 of us. I was allowed out to bury the men in the local cemetery—the Germans were much more solicitous about the dead than they were about the living. As I got back to the building I saw a German guard stop every American who came out. I watched for a bit before going back in. The guard offered a slice of bread for a wrist watch. I saw one American make the exchange and the German made the same offer to the next man. Finally an American came out who had a Parker pen but no watch. He offered that for the bread, and the German took the pen, tore the slice of bread in two and gave the American a *half* slice for it. That night the first group were sent down to the depot, which had been bombed that day, and were placed in boxcars and sealed in. It was still early evening, and a P-47 came over, strafed the railroad yards and killed eleven more men (Americans). Gerolstein will always remain in my mind as a city of misery. The next morning each man received a cup of soup, and a fifth of a loaf of bread and two inches of liverwurst. The Germans told us that this was to be our rations for two days, but every man was so starved that he bolted the whole ration almost at once.

We walked for the next two days from dawn till dark, and without food. American fighter planes would swoop down at us, but we stayed in formation and waved whatever we had. They

would recognize us as Americans and tip their wings and wave and leave. Often as we approached a town it would be just getting a going-over by fighter planes and dive-bombers. We would have to wait at the edge of the town until it was over. You can be sure that we were not royally welcomed. I had an aircorps leather jacket on and a civilian seeing this ran up and cracked me with a shovel. It didn't hurt very much but I was careful to wear my trenchcoat over the leather jacket after that when we went through towns.

On the second night out of Gerolstein we stopped at the little village of Bos. And here the townspeople went all out to feed us as best they could. Every housewife made soup and sandwiches and hot coffee (even ersatz coffee tasted good). These people were very kind, and when they found out that I was a priest they offered me anything they had. I couldn't quite understand why the people of that town were so different, until one of the women informed us that the town's Catholic pastor had told all his parishioners to do what they could for any prisoners who passed through.

Many of the men were getting footsore and had difficulty keeping up. We marched till dark, and were put in a warehouse, but it was so bitter cold that the guards decided to march us all night rather than try to sleep on the cement floor of that frame building. At three a.m. we arrived at Koblenz, and a more devastated city you cannot imagine. Another bomb dropped on it would simply have been wasted. This city of 400,000 was absolutely flat. We wandered around the streets for three hours trying to find a way out of town, but debris had blocked every street. Finally, holding each other's hands we had to walk carefully single file across the bombed and wrecked bridge on the Rhine. We had now walked twenty-four hours straight and we had had to drop many of the men at little village hospitals. About ten kilometers beyond Koblenz we waited for three hours for our rations. Each man received a fifth of a loaf of bread, and then a large number of men shared a quart can of pressed meat. Then they pushed us on with no rest. It was sleeting and we were in wretched spirits and most of the men in very bad physical shape; every step from there on was in misery. At three in the afternoon we arrived absolutely exhausted at Bad Ems—well named, believe me. We felt that we could go no farther. But the townspeople would not have

us; they refused to allow us to stay in the town stables, which had nothing in them but mighty inviting straw. They herded us in the park in the town square, and the people came in droves to ridicule us and laugh at us. The super-race really showed its true status then, and how contemptibly small it seemed to be. How proud I was to be a member of that tired, worn-out group of Yanks. One of the men called for a prayer. Every man bowed his head as I lead the prayer for strength and courage for all of us, and we finished with the Our Father. The hospital there was also the Corps Hdqs. (a violation of Geneva rules), and the German officers refused to speak or listen to our American colonel, and they sent a sergeant out to tell us to get moving. The colonel, one of the two doctors and a couple of majors were through—they had to be helped to the hospital. The rest, about 400 now, went on.

About twenty kilometers on to the next town, and we were all finished—we could go no farther. At last, after walking over 185 miles in the last ten days, they put us in boxcars—sixty men to a French 40 and 8 car (40 and 8 means that it can hold 40 men or 8 horses.) And now (I know that you will find it difficult to believe) we were sealed in these cars for six days and six nights, without a single bite to eat or a drop of water to drink! That seems incredible, but I have 400 witnesses to the fact. There were two little openings at each end of the car. We took turns sitting in each other's laps, for there was no room to sit down. Our hunger during those first three days seemed more than we could stand. All I could think of was Aunt Millie's rolls and homemade bread and bacon and eggs at 821 West 6th St. The men couldn't seem to stop talking about food. Everyone became very irritable at times, but generally speaking the men took this hunger trial in stride. We would take turns reaching out to scrape the snow off the top of the boxcar. Once, while stopping in a town, we called to a woman to bring us some water. We threw four helmets out to her to bring it in. She came back carrying the water and a fourteen or fifteen year old boy helping her. She had just about reached us when a guard saw her. He ran up, dumped our water on the ground, and gave the woman a push. The boy went down to the other end of the car to hoist up the water quickly, but he was not quick enough. By this time the chief guard came up, and the two of them pushed the boy against a

brick retaining wall and gave him a beating. This stuff sounds hackneyed and like a second-rate Hollywood version of Germany, and had someone told this to me a year ago I would have laughed at such "propaganda."

New Years Day I held what passed for a service in our crowded car, and every man present made resolutions, which, I am sure, will be more lasting and carry more weight than the usual New Years resolutions. As for myself, every Christmas and New Years from now on will mean so much more to me than it ever did before. After the third day I didn't seem to be quite so hungry, and the last couple of days it didn't bother me at all. This was the case with the rest of the men too. You can actually get used to going without food.

We didn't know where we were going. We had passed through Berlin, and were heading north. I discovered later that many of us had the same thoughts, but didn't dare to mention it. We had begun to suspect that the Germans were intentionally starving us to death, and that we would not be brought out of the boxcars alive. But on the sixth day, during a driving blizzard, we were let out of the cars, and told that we had arrived at our destination, Neu-Brandenburg, Mecklenburg. We were terribly weak, of course, and it was all we could do to walk the four miles to Stalag II A—our home for the duration. On the way we ate fistfulls of snow, and ice cream has never tasted half so good.

Immediately upon arriving at the Stalag we were sent to the showers and delousing building. The shower brought our spirits up immediately. Looking at my own body I could scarcely believe that it was mine. Normally heavy men looked skinny and thin men looked like skeletons. We had to laugh at each other, for we certainly were a sorry-looking lot. All the officers' heads were shaved—to humiliate us I assume, or to make us more conspicuous if we escaped. The enlisted men did not have their heads shaved. The men began to perk up quickly. That is something that will always remain a mystery to the Germans—the American sense of humor. American soldiers are a great lot—they gripe and complain about every little thing in garrison life, where things are quite comfortable. But when the going gets rough, and they really suffer, then they take it without a moan. It seems like a strange thing, but it is a fact that the more difficult and trying the circumstances are the higher the morale is.

Eating, that almost forgotten experience, was next. They brought in buckets of soup—grass soup with a few turnips in it and lots and lots of little worms. But the only complaint we had, as one G-I remarked, was that the worms weren't fat enough. We guzzled it—and them—greedily.

(*To be continued*)

FRANCIS SAMPSON

Des Moines, Iowa.

THE EVIDENCE OF ROMAN PRIMACY

A power now exists in most active and manifold operation at the very centre of the Church of Christ—a supreme, controlling, harmonising, conservative, unitive, defining power, in that mighty empire of thought which our Lord has set up. Who put it there? It answers: Our Lord Himself. And it points to a great number of proofs, bearing witness to its existence, in the history of eighteen hundred years. Now these proofs are of very various cogency. No one of them perhaps defines, or could define, the whole range of the power; but one exhibits it in this particular, and another in that: for instance, one ancient saint declares: "that it is necessary that every Church should agree with the Roman, on account of its superiority of headship;" another, that "unity begins from it;" a third, that "where Peter is, there is the Church;" a fourth, that "the headship of the Apostolic Church has always flourished in it." Now it is plain that these expressions want a key. And such is supplied by the present existence of that power. The fair and candid mind will see in them much more than they at first sight convey: for it was not the purpose of the writers at the moment to *define* the power to which they were alluding, any more than those living under the supremacy of the British monarchy, in any casual reference to it, would do otherwise than refer to it as an existing thing. If such attributes, then, of the Roman See, separately mentioned by different Fathers, all fit into, and are explained by an existing power, and, when put together, here one and there another, exhibit, more or less, such a power, it is fair so to interpret them, and to infer that the power which we now see existed then.

—Thomas William Allies, in *The See of Peter* (London, 1866), pp. 83 f.

ANTI-CLERICALISM AND CATHOLIC UNITY

Although the attitude commonly and correctly known as anti-clericalism may seem to be neither powerful nor prevalent in our country today, and although there is no definite indication that it will become influential in the immediate future, there are ample and important reasons why our priests and our people should consider this subject carefully. Anti-clericalism is in itself an utter and unmitigated evil. It works to lessen, or even to frustrate, that unity which Our Lord willed that His Church should possess. Furthermore, it leads to evils even worse than itself. The man who is deceived into adopting the attitude of anti-clericalism is in grave danger of casting away his membership in the Church of Christ. In the past, anti-clericalism has frequently been a prelude to apostasy.

While the attitude itself shows no signs of becoming common among Catholics in the United States in the near future (and what is called anti-clericalism in the strict sense of the term can only exist among Catholics or among those who pretend to be members of the Church), there is a real danger that negligence in bringing out the truth on this subject might result in a failure on the part of some of our people to appreciate the inherent viciousness of anti-clericalism. The occasional foreign book of anti-clerical tinge brought into this country and the still more infrequent American article or book review sympathetic with anti-clericalism could, if the truth on this subject were not explained from time to time, bring some uninstructed Catholics to imagine that anti-clericalism could be consistent with a full and loyal expression of the Catholic life. The people who would fall into this delusion would, by that very fact, be blinded to Our Lord's teaching about the splendid and supernatural unity of His Mystical Body.

Strangely enough, the subject of anti-clericalism has been touched upon very little in English Catholic literature. The best-known treatise on anti-clericalism in the English language is to be found in a section of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's admirable work, *Survivals and New Arrivals*. This book of popular and historical apologetics considered anti-clericalism as one of the three movements or attitudes which, taken together, formed the main op-

position to the Catholic Church in 1929, when *Survivals and New Arrivals* first appeared.

What Mr. Belloc describes as anti-clericalism is, however, not the attitude taken in itself, but rather one historical manifestation of this attitude, the political mentality which went by the name of anti-clericalism in the days of France's Third Republic. He spoke of what was supposed to be the origin of this particular movement when he depicted anti-clericalism as "the spirit which is goaded into activity by the invasion of the civil province by clerical agency."[1] He was speaking of that same politico-religious phenomenon when he wrote that the anti-clericalism with which he was concerned came no longer "as a protest against extravagant clerical action, but from a conflict between two incompatible theories of the State—the Catholic and the Neutral, or Lay."[2] The anti-clericalism Mr. Belloc set out to describe was the attitude of those Catholics who espoused the concept of the Neutral State in a predominantly Catholic country. Such persons found themselves "inevitably allied with all forms of antagonism to the Catholic Church: with opposing religions and corporations, with all those to whom the faith is an offence."[3]

As a historian, Mr. Belloc dealt, as he had every right to do, with one historical aspect of anti-clericalism, with the supposed origins and with the actual development of the highly dangerous movement best known to the world two decades ago under that sad label. Unfortunately, however, his historical writing has sometimes been interpreted as an adequate and essential description of anti-clericalism. It is, of course, nothing of the kind. Basically, anti-clericalism designates any disloyal and uncharitable opposition on the part of Catholics to their own spiritual leaders. Although the individual politico-religious movement best known as anti-clericalism in continental Europe during the last part of the nineteenth century and the first part of this one may have claimed to have been "goaded into activity by the invasion of the civil province by clerical agency," there is no reason in the world to suppose that all opposition to the clergy or to the hierarchy on the part of Catholics stems or even claims

[1] *Survivals and New Arrivals* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1941), p. 160.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 175.

to stem from such a source. The movement or the attitude which Mr. Belloc set out to describe was something indigenous to countries of what he called the "Catholic tradition." He asserted that the thing with which he was dealing, this particular kind of anti-clericalism, did not come into the daily lives of English and American Catholics, although he contended that this same movement might "in the near future indirectly affect the condition of Catholics even where they are in a minority amid Protestant surroundings."[4]

THE NATURE OF ANTI-CLERICALISM

In itself, anti-clericalism is nothing more or less than antipathy or opposition on the part of Catholics to the hierarchy or the priesthood in general and to their own spiritual leaders in particular, for whatever reason such an attitude is adopted. It is essentially a fault of Catholics, although the persons guilty of it need not necessarily be laymen and certainly need not be citizens of a country predominantly Catholic in population. Attacks by outsiders against the Church, even when such attacks are directed principally against the Church's spiritual leaders, are not properly designated as anti-clerical activity.

As a matter of fact, most of the assaults and persecutions which enemies of the Church direct against it ultimately center on the hierarchy. The men who have made it their business to attempt to destroy God's kingdom on earth are quite well aware of the fact that their task would be not only possible but easy if they could succeed in getting rid of those whom God has placed as the rulers and teachers of the Church or in minimizing their influence. We have an unmistakable example of the working of this tactic in the conduct of the various Communistic dictators in eastern Europe at the present time. These dictators have made it their policy to kill or to exile the bishops and the outstanding sacerdotal leaders in the territories they have seized, and they have spared no effort to turn the Catholic populace away from those who speak in the name of Christ. Anti-clericalism represents, in the Catholic ranks, a tendency towards that very division in the Church of God which the enemies of the Church seek to bring about. It is a movement within the membership of the Church objectively

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 158.

hostile to the Church itself, whether the individual anti-clerical realizes the import of this hostility or not. As such it differs essentially from opposition to or persecution of the Catholic clergy by those not of the Church.

The antipathy or opposition by a Catholic to his spiritual leaders, that which constitutes the essence of anti-clericalism, is a direct violation of that charity or "love of the brotherhood" which a disciple of Christ is obligated and privileged to have for his brothers in the house of God. Where charity demands a cheerful and enthusiastic participation in the corporate work of the Church under the direction of the men commissioned by Our Lord to lead the faithful, anti-clericalism offers at best only a grudging and mistrustful response to that leadership. In grumbling against the position and the leadership of the hierarchy and of the clergy in general, the anti-clerical foments discord and disunion in Christ's Mystical Body and hinders the activity of the Church militant in working for God's glory against the ever-present opposition from the City of Man.

An open manifestation of anti-clericalism is to be found whenever and for whatever reason Catholics speak and write in such a way as to derogate from the authority and the influence of those responsible to God for the guidance of His Church in this world. Under this heading we must classify complaints about and criticisms of the clergy as a group and of particular spiritual leaders, addressed by Catholics to their fellow members of the Church, with the purpose of restraining these Catholics from the loyal and whole-hearted support due to ecclesiastical authority. Any such attitude or movement on the part of Catholics, at variance with the demands of sincere charity for the leaders of the Church militant, must be considered as a real expression of anti-clericalism. ism.

Now, in treating of this subject, it is important to note that the generous and loyal cooperation demanded by Christian charity in the life of the Catholic Church under the direction of the actually existent hierarchy does not necessarily involve a belief on the part of the individual priest or layman that all the details of the policy of the leaders of the Church militant are theoretically the wisest that could possibly be adopted. Despite the fact that a prominent advocate of a "healthy Catholic anti-clericalism," the Englishman Edward Ingram Watkin, sees as

the alternative to his beloved system "a clericalism which dreads scandal as the worst of evils and pretends to think that whatever the action is taken by the hierarchy or even an individual prelate must be the best and the wisest,"[5] the truth of the matter is that the charity of the house of God demands no such thing. Catholics need not believe that, in the abstract, the particular policy adopted by the ecclesiastical leaders in one locality or with regard to any individual problem is absolutely the best possible. We see the application of this truth in the fact that, time and time again during the course of the Church's history, a man who has worked sincerely and loyally under a spiritual leader for the success of an individual program has changed the details of ecclesiastical policy when he himself has been called to the leadership. Not to look to far afield for an example, we have the case of Bishop Vaughan, who gave loyal and genuine co-operation to the leadership of Cardinal Manning in such affairs as the refusal to sanction the presence of Catholic students at Oxford, and who, as Cardinal Vaughan, the successor to Cardinal Manning, adopted an entirely new policy in this regard.

But, even though an individual Catholic, priest or layman, might be able to conceive of a more effective or brilliant mode of procedure than that actually adopted by the hierarchy of his own time and of his own country, he is bound in conscience to give his loyal and whole-hearted co-operation to the work of the Church, as this work is actually being directed. The Church of Christ in this world is the Church militant. The position of the individual Catholic priest or layman is for this reason quite similar to that of the individual soldier or officer in an army engaged in battle. The individual soldier or officer might very well be convinced (perhaps with no particularly forceful reason), that the campaign in which he is fighting might have been planned more effectively by those in charge of the army as a whole. Nevertheless, the loyalty of that soldier depends directly, here and now, upon his entire willingness to do well the particular work which has been assigned to him. In the same way, the center on a football team might well imagine that the particular play called by

[5] *The Catholic Centre* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1943), p. 148. Mr. Watkin seems to have forgotten that scandal is actually a sin against charity, and one of the very worst of evils.

his quarterback at this particular point in the game is abstractly less desirable than some other manoeuvre. Yet his value to the team depends upon his actual co-operation in the play which has been called. Should he attempt to take the part which would have been assigned to him in some other play, or should he simply neglect to do his part in the particular team work which as a matter of fact has been assigned, he can only succeed in hurting his own cause.

In precisely the same way, the direction given to the Church by the hierarchy through the Catholic priesthood constitutes the only set of orders by which the living and visible Church of Jesus Christ is to live and to act as a unit in the world, here and now. The man who gives only a grudging and minimizing obedience to these orders, or the person who tries to direct his activity in line with a policy which he imagines to be abstractly more effective than the one adopted by the hierarchy, is only hindering the corporate activity of the Church militant in the world. Or, to put the matter in another way, he succeeds only in helping the cause of that leader who is perpetually in conflict with Our Lord and with His Church, that leader whom Christ designated as "the prince of this world."

THE MOTIVES FOR ANTI-CLERICALISM

An alleged incursion by clerics into a purely civil domain, which Mr. Belloc mentioned as the original inciting cause for anti-clericalism, has had little connection with opposition to the ecclesiastical leadership on the part of misguided Catholics in countries like our own. Two causes in particular seem to have motivated the greater portion of such disloyalties among the members of the true Church. The first is an adverse judgment on the conduct or the policies of individual ecclesiastics or groups of ecclesiastics. The second is a rather manifest desire to be accepted by the anti-Catholic world.

What is regarded as improper conduct on the part of individual ecclesiastics or groups of ecclesiastics is objectively no sort of excuse for the adoption of an anti-clerical attitude. If there is one basic fact of which the Catholic is made very plainly aware, through the various Parables of the Kingdom used in the Gospels for different Sundays during the year, it is the truth that the

Church of God in this world is made up of both good and bad members. If the individual person is disposed to obey the hierarchy and to reverence the clergy only on the condition that the members of these orders are all living lives of real perfection, then that person is acting in accordance with a radically heretical postulate. It is, we might say, the central point in the mystery of the Church that the Mystical Body of Christ, the house and the family of the living God, is, in this world, a visible and organized society, within which, until the end of time, bad members will be mingled with the good. It is this society, and only this society, with its good and bad members, for which the sacerdotal prayer of Our Lord Himself was offered. By its divine constitution it is so visibly one in itself and with Him that men can see, from an examination of the Church itself, the character of its members as disciples of Christ and Christ's own status as the authentic bearer of the message from His Father. Within this society alone men are to find the fellowship and the company of Christ in this world. Thus it is the divinely appointed and sole recipient of our corporate social and supernatural loyalty to Christ. The fact that there are imperfect members of Christ both among the laity and among the clergy of the Catholic Church in no way cancels out the debt of loyalty and charity which the disciples of Christ owe to that society and to its leadership.

Furthermore, a belief on the part of an individual priest or layman that the policy of the ecclesiastical leaders in their actual direction of the Church might possibly be improved upon in no way exempts that priest or layman from the fundamental Christian duty of entering whole-heartedly into the activity of the Church according to the instructions being given here and now by the hierarchy as leaders of the Church. The infallibility which God has given to His Church in no wise guarantees that the appointment of this particular pastor, the direction of this particular school system, or the making of this particular Concordat is theoretically the best step for the well being of the Mystical Body as a whole. Nevertheless the rule of the Ordinaries of the Catholic Church here and now is the rule of Our Lord Himself. He wills that His disciples should show their obedience and loyalty to Him by living the life of grace within His Church, under the actual direction and commands of the men who rule by His authority. The misguided writer who tries to persuade his fellow

Catholics to look upon their clergy and hierarchy as salt that has lost its savor, or who implies that the teaching Church and the accredited teachers who act as instruments of the teaching Church have lost their competence to give instruction in the spiritual life, works truly, though perhaps unwittingly, against the living authority of Christ in His kingdom.

A great deal of what may be called modern anti-clerical writing seems to stem from a more or less conscious urge on the part of some lesser Catholic writers to win acclaim from the non-Catholic literary world. The Catholic author who is truly master of his craft (Chesterton might be taken as a shining example) seems never even tempted in this direction. Yet, in the main at least, conditions have not changed a great deal in the line of the reception an anti-clerical can expect from the non-Catholic or anti-Catholic world since Cardinal Manning remarked on the anti-clerical activity of Acton and his like, then busily engaged in their task of trying to discredit Pope Pius IX and the great majority of the Catholic hierarchy.

> The anti-Catholic press has eagerly encouraged this school of thought. If a Catholic can be found out of tune with authority by half a note, he is at once extolled for unequalled learning and irrefragable logic. The anti-Catholic journals are at his service, and he vents his opposition to the common opinions of the Church by writing against them anonymously. Sad as this is, it is not formidable.[6]

Today, when learning and logic are held in somewhat lighter account, the world opposed to Christ prefers to hail the anti-clerical writer as "far-seeing," or as "progressive." It may even give him its highest accolade and dub him "Liberal," and give him not inconsiderable temporal rewards. In any event, the temptation to seek the approval of the non-Catholic world in this comparatively easy way is real and dangerous to the individual writer. It is something against which Catholics of literary bent should be forewarned.

THE THEORETICAL BASIS FOR ANTI-CLERICALISM

A Catholic writer can slip into the attitude of anti-clericalism if he is misinformed or ill-instructed about the nature and the

[6] *The Vatican Decrees in their Bearing on Civil Allegiance* (New York, 1875), p. 27.

unity of the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church is a supernatural society, the company of the disciples of Jesus Christ, held together by His commanding presence in this society as its Head and by the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity within it. In this world it is fiercely opposed, not merely by human powers and contrivings, but by all of the power and bitterness of the leader of God's enemies, the "prince of this world." A Catholic who has allowed himself to grow lax in the practices of his religion can blind himself to these essential and paramount truths about his Church, and can come to think about it as something merely on a par with other organizations he meets in the course of his daily life. He may bring himself to imagine that the Church of Christ is a sort of glorified Republican party. He observes that an enrolled Republican or Democrat (though, of course, not an enrolled Communist) may openly disagree with the policies of party leaders, may criticize these leaders and refuse to co-operate in certain tentatives of the party, and still be not a whit a worse man or less a party man. If he has failed to realize the special and supernatural unity of the Catholic Church, he may delude himself into imagining that the Catholic Church has no greater practical claim upon its members than has the Republican Party upon its enrollees.

Actually, the anti-clerical attitude is completely incompatible with that unity which God Himself has instituted and sustained within the Catholic Church. As the Church of the promises, and thus as the recipient of Our Lord's promise of indefectibility, the Catholic Church will never be destroyed and will never be essentially damaged by anti-clericalism among its children. Yet, although this attitude is not formidable to the Church, it is destructive of the spiritual life in the Catholic who is beguiled into adopting it, and it can be a source of profound disedification and even of ruin to others who fall under his influence. It is a dire spiritual disease, and the doctrinal specific which can overcome it can be found in an examination of true Catholic unity.

THE CAUSES OF CATHOLIC UNITY

The members of the Catholic Church, gathered together as the disciples of Christ and in His company, are united with each other by special ties. Scholastic ecclesiology has long since de-

scribed and defined these bonds of Catholic unity, and classified them within two general groups. The present Holy Father's masterly encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, utilizing as it does the ecclesiological teachings of St. Robert Bellarmine, has brought this scholastic classification into the official teaching of the Catholic Church. As external, visible, corporeal, or juridical bonds of union in the Church, the traditional scholastic ecclesiologists and the *Mystici Corporis* list three factors: the profession of the same Christian faith, the communion of the same Christian sacraments, and subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical pastors, particularly and ultimately the Roman Pontiff, Christ's Vicar on earth. As internal or spiritual bonds of union within the Catholic fellowship we find enumerated the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity.[7] In other words, according to God's own revelation and His authority, the unity of Catholic communion among the members of the Church and with Our Lord is one necessarily involving the profession before the world of baptismal faith, the admission to the sacraments, and eventually of course to the Eucharist, the banquet table of Christ in the House of God which is the Church, and unified corporate activity under the direction of the men whom God has appointed and commissioned to speak by the power and with the authority of His Son. This unity, to be complete, furthermore, demands the actual possession of faith, hope, and charity on the part of those whom God has called into this glorious company.

The highly complex and supernatural oneness of Christ's kingdom is actually brought about by causes which are themselves in the order of the intrinsically supernatural. The first of these causes is the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity within this visible society which is the true Church of God. This is the indwelling which is appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. It is the indwelling according to which the Blessed Trinity is present in a special and supernatural fashion in souls in the state of sanctifying grace. According to this indwelling, God exists in the souls of those men to whom He is known supernaturally, that is, as He is in Himself, rather than merely as He is knowable as the First Cause of creatures. Present

[7] Cf. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* XXXV, 7 (July 20, 1943), 225 ff.

in this supernatural manner in the soul, God acts as the cause of the life of grace, and as the object of sincere charity, according to which He is loved because He is known supernaturally. Thus, God is present in Catholics to bind them by love within His society, and in non-Catholics to move them to enter the Church. The life of divine grace and of charity is corporate and social as well as individual in its implications. The love with which God wills to be loved by the creatures whom He has raised to the supernatural level is meant to be, not merely the act of an individual person, but the act of a real and organized society. Thus, it is perfectly true to say that God dwells in this supernatural way in the one society which He has instituted as the vehicle of His Son's message and life. The corporate activity of this society is, whatever the spiritual condition of any of its members or groups of members may be, the social expression of the life of grace. The man who is favored by God with membership in the Catholic Church is, by that very fact, engaged in a company within which God Himself dwells to hold the members together in their corporate work of charity, of prayer, and of sacrifice. Both the internal and the external bonds of unity within the Catholic Church depend directly upon the real and supernatural presence of God within it. The Catholic who allows himself to be deluded into adopting an anti-clerical attitude is frustrating in his own life that movement towards unity with His fellow Catholics which comes from the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity within the Church.

Furthermore, the real union of the members of the Catholic Church among themselves and with Christ is something due to the actual presence of Our Lord within the Church as its Head, as its Founder, its Sustainer, and its Saviour. Our people profess the same faith and possess the other bonds of unity, not because of any naturally explicable social cause, but solely because they constitute the assembly of the disciples of Christ, the assembly of men and women whom Our Lord has chosen and called to be with Him. The power and the grace by which they are enabled to overcome the adverse forces of the world, and to remain gathered in the unity of Christ come from Him alone. By reason of His presence, and by reason of the grace which He gives, His followers constitute among themselves and with Him a true and perfect society, a social unit to which respect and obedience are due, a

social unit more important and vital than any other assembly into which men may be called. The man who is ungrateful enough to attempt the discrediting of the visible agents of social unity within the Catholic Church tries, in so far as he is able, to undo Our Lord's own work within His kingdom.

THE EXTERNAL BONDS OF UNITY

The outward bonds of unity within the Church of God are the profession of the same Christian faith, the communion of the same sacraments, and subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical authority. Theologically, these external ties of fellowship within the Church differ sharply in their function from the inward or spiritual bonds. A man becomes and remains a member of the Church of Jesus Christ in this world essentially and solely through the possession of these outward bonds of unity. The Catholic Church in this world is actually the congregation of men and women who possess these visible bonds of union with our God and with each other. The inward bonds, faith, hope, and charity exist and operate in the Church. They are the sources of that life which finds its corporate expression in this world only in the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, possession of these qualities is not the factor which renders a man a member of the society of Christ. It is true that no one in this world can possess charity without either being a member of the Catholic Church or sincerely intending to enter this society. Nevertheless, a man becomes and remains a member of the Church only by the baptisimal profession of divine Christian faith never publicly recalled, by the fact of his admission to the sacraments, and by his willing subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical authority. Each one of these bonds constitutes a force uniting the members of the Catholic Church with Our Lord and with each other. The spirit of anticlericalism is, in the last analysis, a tentative running counter to the direction of these forces.

Catholics are formed into one body and joined to one another by reason of their profession of the same Christian faith. In this world they are the group or the unity explicitly accepting as true and as a real and supernatural communication from God the truths which Our Lord Himself teaches in the world as divinely revealed. There can be, of course, and there really are, persons

not members of the Church and yet possessing true divine faith. This class of persons would include catechumens or individuals desiring to enter the Church, excommunicated persons and schismatics who have not sinned against the faith. Yet the one society which authentically and correctly professes this faith is the Catholic Church, the company of Our Lord's disciples within which He lives and teaches. The teaching of Christ, the message of the living God, comes to the members of the Church through the voice of the Catholic Church's hierarchy, the *ecclesia docens*. The man who adopts or who encourages an attitude of opposition to or mistrust of the hierarchy thus, in effect, works to separate Our Lord's disciples from His teaching. Furthermore, since the profession of the true Christian faith is always and necessarily something effected in this world only in the face of a highly formidable opposition, the Catholic who sets out to oppose his own spiritual leaders or who encourages others to do so is definitely giving aid and comfort to the spiritual enemy of Christ. The true and baptismal profession of the Christian faith is, by its very nature, a force which should draw Catholics together in the face of a world which opposes Our Lord's doctrine. It tends essentially and necessarily to attach Catholics to their clergy and to their hierarchy by bonds of loyal reverence and affection.

The communication of the divine sacraments, the second of those forces which are listed together as the external bonds of unity within the Catholic Church has precisely the same effect. The sacramental system centers around the Blessed Eucharist. The members of the Catholic Church, enjoying the communication of the sacraments, is one of the holy assembly, the royal priesthood, united to Christ and with Him offering to God the eternal sacrifice of the New Testament. That sacrifice is the sign of Christian prayer and devotion, the inward sacrifice to God. Prayer is the expression of Christian faith and of Christian hope. It is meant to be and it should be the manifestation of true Christian charity.

In the sacrificial Eucharistic act, the members of the Church are bound together among themselves and with Our Lord in the strongest possible ties. It is the highest social act of worship, the act in which we manifest and increase our love for God and for one another. Any tendency to separate the members of the Catholic Church into mutually hostile divisions, and particularly any attempt to engender antagonism in the Church towards

the group whom Our Lord Himself has made the active ministers of the great sacrifice is thus manifestly counter to the intention of God Almighty. To attempt to turn Catholics against each other along other lines, racial or local for instance, is evil enough. But to use the distinction of the laity and the hierarchy, a distinction inherent in the Church by the very will of Christ, as an instrument for antagonism in the society of the disciples constitutes a perversion of what is in itself a means for unity and sanctification.

Considering the Eucharist as a sacrament, the communion which is essential to membership in the Church of Christ means admission to the banquet table of the Lord in the house of God. Those who are really members of the Church and disciples of Christ are the men and women whom He described as His brothers and His sisters. It is the express command of Christ that, within the house of God, His members should love one another. To violate the love of Christian charity with respect to the men from whom the membership of the Church must receive the Eucharistic banquet is thus, in a special way, to oppose the will of Christ.

By the fact that a man is a Catholic, he professes, and he is obliged to give, a real and sincere subjection to legitimate ecclesiastical pastors. Anti-clericalism, as it actually exists, is based upon a misunderstanding or a distortion of this essential element of life in Christ's Mystical Body. The Catholic hierarchy, the Pope and the residential bishops, and all of the ecclesiastical superiors who rule their flocks by legitimate ecclesiastical delegation, can issue commands which their subjects must obey under penalty of mortal sin. The Holy Father and the residential bishops can and do make real laws. These laws and the precepts and commands legitimate ecclesiastical superiors issue in virtue of their office come to Catholics as orders from Our Lord Himself. They are the ordinances by which the Church of Jesus Christ lives and acts as a visible society in this world, proclaiming the faith of Christ and doing His work in the face of all the opposition which can be brought to bear against Our Lord by the prince of this world. Those who profess the divine faith and who are privileged to dwell in the house of God as the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ are bound to give the orders of ecclesiastical superiors enthusiastic and loyal obedience, the response which is due to the orders of Our Lord Himself. The man who adopts an

anti-clerical attitude, and who thus brings himself to offer only a grudging and mistrustful subjection to competent ecclesiastical authority, by that very fact cuts himself off from the fullness of his connection with Jesus Christ.

The anti-clerical attitude is based, to a great extent, on a misunderstanding of the nature of ecclesiastical authority. The man who is deluded into adopting that attitude is prone to admit the function of the clergy and of the hierarchy in dispensing the sacramental means of grace. He is also prepared to admit the teaching power of the hierarchy. What he fails to appreciate, however, is the basic and essential fact that the ecclesiastical hierarchy of jurisdiction has received from Our Lord a real power of rule, so that it can issue orders to the faithful by the power and with the authority of Our Lord Himself. When, for instance, a residential bishop forbids his subjects to read a certain paper, the effectiveness of that order definitely does not depend upon the presence within that paper of heretical views and teachings. Like any other real superior, the ecclesiastical authority is not obliged to give the reasons for his command in the command itself. The power to issue a definite command is something quite different from a mere competence to persuade. In many instances the anti-clerical seems to imagine that the position of the ecclesiastical superior is merely that of an older brother, who has the authority to reason with a younger and to try to bring him to adopt a different mode of activity, but who lacks the power to issue a definite command. Undoubtedly there is a tendency on the part of the ill-instructed Catholic to think of the Church in terms of the many social organizations in our own time which have no power to bind their members in conscience. To make such a mistake about the Church is, however, to misunderstand the nature of Christ's Mystical Body in this world. To act on such a misunderstanding is to frustrate the life of Christ in His disciple.

THE INTERNAL BONDS OF UNITY

The internal bonds of unity within the Catholic Church, faith, hope, and charity, likewise are such as to bring Catholics to give their spiritual leaders ungrudging and loyal co-operation in the work of Christ. But, where the external bonds of unity demand such loyal union, the internal bonds actually bring it about. A

man who has true Catholic faith is, by that very fact, unhesitatingly by the side of the *ecclesia docens*. Christian hope, of itself, brings a man to desire God as his own good, as the Reward and the Happiness of the individual member of the Church and of the Church as a whole. Christian charity is an act of love for God, and for all men in God. By charity we love our fellow-Catholics as our brothers in God's house, and we manifest the sincerity of our love for non-Catholics by our prayers and our other efforts to bring them into the society of Christ.

Basically and essentially, anti-clericalism is a violation of this Christian charity. It represents an attitude quite contrary to the demands of charity on the part of Catholics towards religious superiors. A Catholic does not manifest the true love of the brotherhood unless he shows to his superiors and to the clergy in general the sincere affection dictated by love.

CATHOLIC LOYALTY AND COMMUNIST UNANIMITY

Despite the somewhat bungling pronouncement of Mr. Reinhold Niebuhr, the fullness of loyalty demanded by the Catholic Church from its own children does not make Catholics and Communists "rival absolutists"[8] in the modern world. It is perfectly true that the Communist Party demands and receives from its own members an obedience within the bounds of absolute servility. The Communist Party member is quite ready to give his enthusiastic support to the Kremlin platform as it stands. The fact that this platform, here and now, involves a complete contradiction of what was asserted by the same authorities last week or last month will never dampen the enthusiasm of the Communist.

In the last analysis the unity of the Communist Party is that of a giant conspiracy against the liberty of man and the rights of God. The Party holds its members together with the closest ties simply because it realizes the simple fact that no corporate action can be effective in the world without the complete and wholehearted co-operation of the members of the group. The purpose of Communism is entirely contrary to the purpose of the Church.

[8] Cf. *Christianity and Power Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), p. 113.

The ties of fear and cupidity which bind the individual Communist to his party and to his fellow-Communists are utterly different from the bonds which hold Catholics in the unity of Christ's kingdom. Yet the adherence of the Catholic to his Church should be at least as visibly loyal and enthusiastic as is the attachment of the Communist to his party. Our bonds of union are different, but they are not weaker. The indwelling of the Holy Ghost within the Catholic Church, together with the various bonds of unity resultant from this indwelling, demand of their very nature a social solidarity within the Catholic Church more perfect and more powerful than the group unity within any lesser organization. Thus there is no possibility of giving a sincere love and loyalty to Our Lord, as He lives in and rules over the Church militant, without, at the same time manifesting a genuine and sovereign loyalty to the Church itself and to those Church leaders through whom the teachings and the command of Christ come to us.

The loyalty to the Church which God demands of Catholics is certainly not of the type destructive of or harmful to perfect freedom on the part of the individual Catholic. The society to which Our Lord commands us to render the service of loyalty is that which contains and preaches the divine truth through which alone men are made free. It does not carry with it any obligation to follow the leaders of the Church when they speak other than as rulers in Christ's kingdom. In questions merely civil or political, when they speak as private citizens, they are to be heard and respected with the charity that is their due, but they are not necessarily to be followed. But, when they speak in the name of Christ, to teach or to command the faithful of Christ, then, by the will of God Himself, they are to be accorded the ungrudging and unhesitating obedience that results from the unity of the Catholic Church. In that unity, through their endeavors to forward the cause of Christ, Catholics are called by God to exercise their freedom. If Catholics advert to the nature and the unity of that society within which they dwell as the brothers of Jesus Christ, they will certainly never be tempted into the disloyalty of anti-clericalism.

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Answers to Questions

DIRECTION ON VOCATION

Question: What form of direction should be given by a priest to a girl who expresses a desire to join a very rigorous religious institute? In particular, what is to be said of a priest in such a situation who would try to persuade the girl to seek another institute, less austere than the one of her preference?

Answer: A priest confronted with a case of this kind should strive to inform himself about the girl's stability of character, physical stamina, and adaptability to the desired form of religious life. To acquire such knowledge he should ordinarily have her under his spiritual direction for a considerable period—preferably at least two years—before a definite decision is made. If he comes to the conclusion that she is not fitted for the rigors of the congregation to which she aspires, but nevertheless gives signs of a religious vocation, he could prudently suggest that she consider entrance into an institute of less severity. But if she gives proof of possessing the qualifications necessary for the more austere life, he should encourage her and assist her, as far as he can, to attain the goal of her ambition.

Certainly, a priest who would attempt to deter a girl from entering a strict order because he entertains a dislike for such institutes, or because he feels that those who bind themselves to the observance of a rigorous rule are exceeding the bounds of sane asceticism—whether or not they have the requisite qualifications and the desire to embrace this form of life—would be doing the aspirant a grave injury and would manifest a deplorable lack of the true Catholic spirit. If the Catholic Church approves strict religious orders, membership in which involves much that is hard to human nature, it is because the Church realizes that there are heroic souls in the world who receive from God a vocation to this form of life. It is surely an act of arrogance for any individual Catholic to pit his judgment against the mind of the Catholic Church, and when this arrogant attitude manifests itself in an attempt to frustrate a probable vocation, the perpetrator may render himself guilty of depriving a soul of a lifetime

of happiness and of an exalted place in heaven destined for it had it followed the course which God intended.

USE OF A PROBABLE OPINION

Question: May a priest in his personal conduct follow an opinion which he himself considers false, although it has sufficient probability for him to allow a penitent to follow it?

Answer: A person is never allowed to follow an opinion in favor of liberty, to the rejection of an opinion in favor of law, when he sincerely judges the more lenient opinion to be devoid of sufficient probability to render it a reasonable practical norm of conduct; for one's own conscience, prudently formed, must be followed. This principle would be upheld by all theologians, whether they are probabiliorists, equiprobabilists or probabilists, although they would differ among themselves as to the degree of probability which an opinion must possess in order to be a reasonable practical norm of conduct. Accordingly, the priest in question could not safely follow an opinion which he himself considers false, in favor of liberty, even though others regard it as sufficiently probable to be accepted.

It could happen that the priest has a penitent who regards this particular opinion as sufficiently probably to follow safely, and the confessor may not oblige him to accept his (the confessor's) view, provided two conditions are verified. *First*, the opinion must be one that is not evidently untenable. If a penitent defends as lawful a manner of conduct that has been condemned as sinful by the Church or by the common consent of reputable theologians, the confessor can and should command him to renounce his opinion, under pain of the denial of absolution. (We abstract from the case of the confessor who, for sufficient reasons, judges that the penitent had best be left in good faith regarding the sinfulness of some action.) For example, if a penitent upholds as licit the practice of contraception, the confessor must refuse absolution, as long as the penitent persists in this view, even though it would seem that the latter is sincerely convinced that he is right. For practical purposes, this first condition would be fulfilled only when the opinion in question is defended by at least one reliable theologian. *Second*, the penitent must have arrived at his opinion in a prudent manner.

This would be the case if he previously was directed by a priest who held the opinion in question, or if he himself has sufficient knowledge of moral matters to form his own conscience. For example, if a priest-penitent sincerely believes that certain circumstances constitute an excusing cause from the obligation of the Divine Office, his confessor should not require him to give up this opinion, even though he himself (the confessor) does not regard it as sufficiently probable—provided, of course, that the opinion is not so extremely lenient that no reliable theologian would uphold it, as was explained above. However, if the penitent has not the theological knowledge requisite to form a prudent judgment for himself, and needs guidance for the direction of his conscience, he is obliged to follow the opinion proposed by the confessor from whom he seeks absolution, even though this confessor takes a stricter view of the matter than some others (Cf. St. Alphonsus, *Homo Apostolicus*, tr. XVI, nn. 118, 119).

VASECTOMY AND IMPOTENCE

Question: Is a man prevented from contracting a valid marriage by the fact that he has had the operation of double vasectomy?

Answer: The question as to whether or not a man who has had the operation of double vasectomy is sexually impotent has been the subject of much discussion among theologians and canonists in recent years. Those who accept the affirmative opinion argue that such a man is permanently incapable of emitting true semen; hence, he is permanently impotent (*e.g.* Gasparri, *De matrimonio* [Rome, 1932], I, App. I, n. 7). This opinion has been favored in practices by the Rota (cf. Bouscaren, Canon Law Digest, II [Milwaukee, 1943], 287).

However, the negative view is sustained by a considerable number of competent authorities. One of their arguments is that the effects of the operation of vasectomy can be repaired—that is, the severed *vasa deferentia* can be reuinted, and consequently the man cannot be said to be *permanently* impotent (cf. Iorio, *Theologia moralis* [Naples, 1939], III, n. 1178). Another, and more basic argument—which would apply even in the case where competent medical authorities pronounce the joining of the *vasa deferentia* impossible—is this: a man who has had this operation can still perform the conjugal act, as far as can be

naturally observed by the ordinary person. There can be erection, penetration, and the emission of what appears to be semen, with the normal accompanying gratification. Now, it would seem that the law of God would require no more for the valid contracting and use of marriage than the power to perform an act which, as far as the perceptive powers of the ordinary person are concerned, is a true act of sexual union. When this takes place, there would seem to be present a true *potentia coeundi*, even though, because of some defect not perceptible to the senses, there is lacking some factor required for the generation of offspring. Accordingly, the man who has had the operation of double vasectomy is no more to be considered impotent than the woman who has had both ovaries removed (cf. Nowlan, S.J., "Double Vasectomy and Marital Impotence," *Theological Studies*, VI, 3 [Sept. 1945], 392).

The latter view seems to be sufficiently probable, both intrinsically and extrinsically, to allow a vasectomized man to marry, according to the principle that doubtful impotence does not prevent marriage (Can. 1014, §2). However, a man who has had such an operation would be doing a grave injustice to his intended wife if he did not inform her of his condition, so that she may realize before the marriage that she can never have children by him.

FRANCIS J. CONNELL, C.SS.R.

BREAKING THE LARGE HOST FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Question: Is there any authority in Roman pronouncements for breaking up the Benediction Host and giving it after Benediction to several communicants? The case is of Benediction after Mass in a station or mission where the Blessed Sacrament is not kept.

Answer: Moralists generally are opposed to the practice of breaking the large Host for the purpose of giving Holy Communion. If it is the large Host, consecrated as an essential part of the Mass, some hold that only the giving of Holy Viaticum, or some like emergency, would justify the practice. Sabetti-Barrett, however (*Compendium theologiae moralis* [30th ed., 1924],

p. 618), would permit such division for the accomodation of one or two communicants who could not well await another opportunity of receiving.

Where the case is that of the Host used for exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, authorities, *v.g.* Sabetti-Barrett (*loc. cit.*), would require an instance of greater necessity, since there is a definite provision of the *Instructio Clementina* (XXXI, 24) directing that the Host of exposition be consumed at Mass. It is true that the Instruction is a regulation for the Forty Hours' Devotion but it is quite logical to regard it as the norm to be followed after any exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and hence that incident to the usual Benediction. An obvious solution of the difficulty proposed by our correspondent would be to reserve some of the small Particles, consecrated during the Mass at the mission station, for the Communion of those presenting themselves after the Benediction which follows Mass, unless the case of great necessity is verified in a given instance.

THE PURPOSE OF THE TABERNACLE VEIL

Question: Is it necessary to use a tabernacle veil when you have double doors on the tabernacle? If so, why is the veil used, i.e., what is the purpose of the vail?

Answer: The question concerns the external veil of the tabernacle, the all-enveloping cover which surrounds the tabernacle structure like a tent. The interior veil, which hangs inside the door of the tabernacle, is no where prescribed by liturgical law but is entirely a matter of custom. The outside veil, however, technically known as the *conopaeum*, is of strict obligation, as is evident from the rubrics of the Roman Ritual (Tit. IV, Cap. i, 6) and the provision of the *Codex juris* (Canon. 3150). The sacred Congregation of Rites has decided that even then the tabernacle is of precious material or of very artistic design the *conopaeum* may not be dispensed with (No. 3520; Aug. 7, 1880. Cf. also decree No. 4137, of July 1, 1904). The presence of double doors, therefore, would be no reason for neglecting the external veil of the tabernacle.

As to the second member of the question, concerning the purpose of the *conopaeum*, the symbolism of a veil as referring to the sacramental presence beneath the species of bread at once

suggests itself. Moreover, the presence of the veil on the tabernacle is the certain liturgical sign that the latter contains the Blessed Sacrament. In this country, it is usual to regard the burning sanctuary lamp as the evidence of the Sacramantal Presence, but this is not universally so, as lamps may legitimately burn before other altars in the church as well as in front of relics and images.

WILLIAM J. LALLOU.

PRIESTLY MEDITATION ON THE MASS

A priest should make the Mass a special and a frequent subject of serious meditation. He should love to dwell upon the great attributes of God—upon His majesty, His power, His wisdom, and His infinite sanctity. He should realize that He who made him, and who has adopted him as a son, comes down from heaven into his very hands; that He treats him with the greatest familiarity, and bestows upon him not only the kiss of peace, but actually gives him His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink. To one who not only believes this, but who thoroughly realizes all that it means, life itself takes on a different hue.

—Bishop John S. Vaughan, in *The Minister of Christ* (New York: Joseph F. Wagner, Inc., 1926), I, 23 f.

THE DOMINANT INTENTION OF SEMINARY LIFE

A boy does not say: "I intend to become a priest," because his reception of Orders will depend on whether, when the time comes, the bishop will judge him suitable, whether he will judge him useful or necessary for the diocese, and whether he will freely call him to the priesthood. Hence a young man's intention to enter the priesthood is conditional: "I shall be a priest if I am judged suitable and duly called by the bishop." The absolute object of the intention is the acquisition of complete suitability for the priesthood: "I intend to make myself suitable for the priesthood so that I can without temerity present myself in due time to the bishop with a view of receiving from him the canonical call to the priesthood."

—The Rev. John Blowick, in *Priestly Vocation* (Dublin: M. H. Gill and Son, Ltd., 1932), p. 131.

Book Reviews

THE EPISTLES AND GOSPELS FOR SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS. Translated with a Commentary. By Ronald Knox. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1946. Pp. vii + 374. $2.50.

The text used in this epistle and gospel book is the well-known and favorably received version of the New Testament made several years ago by Msgr. Ronald Knox. Epistles taken from the Old Testament have been newly translated by the author. In one instance in addition to the liturgical passage we have a few additional verses prefixed in italics to give something of the background of the passage. As the Knox version has been approved by the hierarchy of England and as this edition of the epistles and gospels has the imprimatur of Cardinal Spellman, all canonical requirements are fulfilled for its use in the pulpits of our churches.

We need only say that the commentary is just that. It does not give outlines for sermons or even suggest sermon material, although here and there will be found a happy reflection that deserves to be incorporated into a homily on the particular epistle or gospel. Not a little of the commentary is devoted to a justification of the English rendering, or to explaining why a certain word was avoided. For example, we are told, "I have used 'worship' rather than 'adore,' because the latter word, though traditionally stronger, is now hardly used except by young ladies referring to their favorite brand of cigarettes . . ." And again, "I do not see how you can get rid of the word 'Woman' in our Lord's speech to His Mother (Jn. 2:4). 'Lady' may have been all right in the Middle Ages, but it is a form of address only tramps use now."

There are some passages in the commentary which will cause both the theologian and the exegete to raise their eyebrows in astonishment, as for example: the comment on the opening words of the epistle for the feast of the Immaculate Conception, "Dominus possedit me in initio viarum suarum." The author writes after mentioning that most modern writers give the sense of "created" to the verb, "We can be less anxious about our theology, since the Church now applies this passage . . . to our Blessed Lady." It is surely an easy way to avoid theological anxiety in interpreting the Scriptures to take refuge in accommodation. Again in the commentary on the same epistle we read, ". . . the thought behind it is no doubt that our Lady was the less-than-Divine accomplice of God's plan for our redemption, just as Hebrew thought acclaimed, in heavenly Wisdom, the less-than-Divine accomplice of our creation."

How can there be any "less-than-Divine" accomplice in creation which is an exclusively Divine act in which no subordinate causality can have any place at all? Exegetes are coming more and more to the view that Wisdom as delineated in the sapiential books is a personification, and that we have a clear indication in the Old Testament of a plurality of Persons in God.

The Commentary, however, is of secondary importance. The important part of this book is the text of the epistles and gospels. It is printed in easily read type and is very well adapted for pulpit use.

JOSEPH L. LILLY, C.M.

MOST WORTHY OF ALL PRAISE. By Vincent P. McCorry, S.J. New York: The Declan X. McMullen Co. 1946. Pp. 189. $2.00.

These sixteen essays on convent life take their title from the *omni laude dignissima* of our Lady's Common Office, which occurs in the responsory invoking her help on the *devotus femineus sexus* who are the subjects of the book. Writing in the limpid, cheerful manner which Fr. Francis P. Donnelly has impressed upon four decades of Jesuit writers, Fr. McCorry in his maiden book (brought out, at that, by a new publishing house) shows himself already the master of the particular kind of spiritual life that is led in convents devoted to the "mixed" ministry of Christ. Setting as his theme that a Sister's life should be happy, this benign author outlines the way that consecrated women can turn their problems into a source of the contentment which is the "hundredfold" promised on earth to those who leave all and follow Him. Without displaying the erudition of St. Francis de Sales or the minute probing powers of Frederick Faber, he approximates their skill in analyzing the chief obstacles to convent happines: unsound notion of the religious vocation, wrong balance between external labors and prayer, slavery to the minutiae, egotism, worry, "profound distrust of peace," inconsideration of youth for age and age for youth, uncharity, jealousy, unwillingness to suffer. Deftly Fr. McCorry prescribes for these spiritual maladjustments. Like a capable physician he knows when to give sober counsel, when to rally with humor, when to scold, when to encourage. He puns (Religious "feel awe-ful" about their vocation); he banters ("subtle pandemonium and quiet riot," "Sisters do have their quiet little mental immobilities," "The religious life that stops at Palm Sunday does just that—it stops," "We are stewards and deckhands on the Bark of Peter, but never do we lift our eyes to the blue sky . . . We are hanging over the side of this blessed Ship, counting the waves"); he denounces: the satire of the Sister who excuses her peace-wrecking tantrums because she cannot help her moods (p. 94), and the warning

against favoritism as a means of recruiting vocations (p. 84), ought to be put on the Syllabus of Required Reading for Religious Women; beyond all this, he understands. Convent confessors could make a bookmark of the sentence, "Deep in the soul of every woman is a craving for individual attention and unique notice."

Fr. McCorry makes no attempt to review the religious life. There is no treatment of the vows, the external works in school and hospital, or the relations with Church authorities. The publishers of Cotel and of Vermeersch need not worry about an intruder upon their sales. The excellence of *Most Worthy of All Praise* is the help it can offer our modern Marthas and Marys to solve the vexations that cling to their dedicated lives and so get on in the way of peace and Christian joy. No gift of prophecy is required to say that the book will achieve extensive popularity.

JAMES MCVANN, C.S.P.

PERENNIAL PHILOSOPHERS. By Arthur H. Ryan. Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, Ltd., 1946. Pp. 71. 3/6.

This small volume contains the text of a series of radio broadcasts given in Ireland. The perennial philosophers are St. Augustine, Boethius, Abelard, and St. Thomas Aquinas. There are also chapters dealing with the Greek origins of the *philosophia perennis* and the neo-scholastic revival. In these several chapters the author presents vivid pictures of the character and work of the thinkers with whom he is concerned. His book may serve as an admirable introduction to these four great men. Throughout his work he shows thorough scholarship and complete understanding. There is here no extravagance of statement, either pro or con, such as has often done damage to a proper appreciation of the great patristic and mediaeval philosophers and theologians.

Msgr. Ryan's judgments are uniformly good and he has an effective way of expressing them. Of the writers who have sung Abelard's praises for his seduction of Heloise he writes that they "merely prove either their own hypocrisy or their incompetence." Commenting upon the supposed opposition between Plato's thought and that of Aristotle he writes: "But this conception will not stand the scrutiny of the texts. Deeper acquaintance reveals Plato as a very close and strict reasoner, and shows how Aristotle's thought can soar mightily. There are many more resemblances than differences." He can rightly call some of the worst practices of our day an "international outburst of empty nominalism" and go on to state that "an even more alarming treachery to European tradition is the substitution of the appeal to instinct and emotion rather than to reason."

Msgr. Ryan closes with some words of good advice for those who speak and write in defense of the Christian faith and the European tradition. They are:

(1) Never criticising any point of view without having gone to the trouble of fully mastering it;
(2) Never allowing ourselves to say or write for those who agree with us what we would not be ready to say or write for anybody anywhere; and
(3) Never indulging in that kind of remark of which the only pungency is its power to wound.
These, indeed, are only the rules of elementary fair play; but it is easy to see how much more fruitful our discussions would become if they were more widely observed. (p. 69)

Perennial Philosophers is a book that should have a wide acceptance. It is a good book for students of philosophy, whether in college or not. It should be placed in public libraries. There it might serve to lead readers to something better than what such men as Bertrand Russell and Will Durant have written upon related subjects.

JOHN K. RYAN

I TEACH CATECHISM. By Rt. Reverend Monsignor M. A. Schumacher. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1946. 3 vols.: Vol. I, pp. 271; Vol. II, pp. 449; Vol. III, pp. 599. $0.00.

There is no better evidence of the vigor and scope of the catechetical movement in this country at the present time than these three volumes of Msgr. Schumacher which are appropriately entitled *I Teach Catechism.* The work of catechizing by trained teachers using sound methods and scientifically prepared texts has been repeatedly urged by the Church, especially through the directives of Pope Pius X in his Encyclical *Acerbo nimis,* "On the Teaching of Christian Doctrine" (1905), and in the Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri,*" "On Christian Education of Youth" (1929) of Pope Pius XI, together with the Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council *Provido sane Consilio,* "On the Better Care and Promotion of Catechetical Education" (1935). A renewed interest in the great work of catechetical instruction on the part of priests and teachers has been the result. The appearance of the Revised Baltimore Catechism in 1938 under the direction of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine prompted the publication of numerous texts, syllabi, courses of study, work books, exercises, and commentaries, all of which were based upon this Catechism. In an official statement appended to the Revised Catechism, the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine foresaw

and fostered this healthy condition. "These Catechisms," read the statement, "are doctrinal summaries of religion and a basis for pedagogical text books, which will be prepared as courses of religion by capable and experienced theologians and catechetical teachers." Msgr Schumacher's *I Teach Catechism* is the latest addition with new and marked elements of excellence to this catechetical literature.

The three volumes of this work make up a complete explanation of all the questions and answers in the Revised Baltimore Catechism Nos. 1 and 2, as well as of the First Communion Catechism based on these texts. *I Teach Catechism* is planned as a set of manuals of instruction for the use of teachers of religion in the elementary grades of Catholic schools, and the material is organized by grades with explanations of selected questions and answers for essential learning suited to the capabilities of students in each respective grade. These volumes are a substantial revision of the popular series by the same author which was entitled *How to Teach the Catechism* and appeared in 1935. A Preface and a chapter on the teaching method of the present volumes describe the nature of the work and present an excellent pedagogical view for the teacher. Brief but sound directions for the teacher introduce the teaching matter for each of the eight grades.

Msgr. Schumacher intends that *I Teach Catechism* be used as a teachers' daily classbook with the text of the Catechism or a similar book in the hands of the pupils. It is not, we are told, merely a reference text. The teacher who is obliged to follow a diocesan course of studies or a locally imposed syllabus can nevertheless adapt and follow one of these volumes with singular profit. It is a veritable mine of catechetical material, perhaps over-abundant for some lessons, particularly in the 3 to 5 grade cycle, and is arranged so as to cover the entire Catechism in three separate concentric cycles. The teacher of weekday religion classes conducted for public school pupils will find these volumes of invaluable help in arranging and explaining the subjects selected for study. So, too, as the author suggests, the pastor of souls might well and profitably use these volumes, especially that for the 6-8 grades, in a course of catechetical instructions for the people.

There is a typographical omission of a number on p. 3, Vol. II, and the average age of pupils in the fifth grade ordinarily is not twelve. There is a good bibliography, but more attention could be given to visual aids throughout the work. This reviewer would like to see in our catechetical manuals more detailed study of the public life of our Lord placed between the third and fourth Articles of the Creed. Msgr. Schumacher has again placed all catechists in his debt. *I Teach Catechism* should immeasurably increase their zeal and efficiency.

JOSEPH B. COLLINS, S.S.

Book Notes

The brilliant Spanish Jesuit professor, Joseph M. Bover, a consultor of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, brought out during the war the latest edition of the Greek and Latin New Testament, *Novi testamenti biblia graeca et latina* (Madrid: Instituto "Fr. Suarez," 1943). Fr. Bover's critical introduction for this edition is superb. Fr. Bover has taken cognizance of the latest evaluations of the New Testament manuscripts, and he has brought out a text which should become a standard in the Catholic schools. In future editions the typographical errors which have crept into his Greek text, as for instance in *Matt.* 18:6 and in *Apoc.* 22:16, will certainly be corrected. Incidentally, the Greek and Latin New Testament put out by Fr. Merk, in an edition since the start of the late war, has a glaring typographical fault in *Matt.* 12:43. In the present rate of exchange, Fr. Merk's *Novum testamentum graece et latine,* in the fifth edition (Rome: The Biblical Institute, 1944), sells for about half the price demanded for Fr. Bover's edition.

Interest in that jewel of patristic literature, the *Letter to Diognetus,* seems to be reaching a new high among European Catholic scholars. Writing in *Gregorianum* (XXV, 1 [Jan. 1944], pp. 74-102), Fr. F. Ogara, S.J., sets out to prove that an examination of the content and the style of this Letter will show that there is much to be said in favor of attributing it to Theophilus of Antioch. Now, in the *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* (XIII, 1, 2, [Jan. and Apr., 1946]), D. Paul Andriessen presents carefully marshalled evidence in favor of his thesis that this letter is really nothing more or less than the supposedly lost Apology of Quadratus. Fr. Andriessen believes that the celebrated fragment of Quadratus, conserved in the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius of Caesarea, fits into one of the manifest lacunae in the preserved text of the *Letter to Diognetus.* Both Fr. Ogara's article, "Aristidis et epistolae ad Diognetum cum Theophilo Antiocheno cognatio," and Fr. Andriessen's "L'apologie de Quadratus conservée sous le titre d'Epitre à Diognète" manifest the same increased interest in patristic studies shown in the masterly translation of Clement of Rome and St. Ignatius of Antioch by Dr. James A. Kleist, S.J., in our own country.

Sheed and Ward have brought out Msgr. Ronald Knox's translation of the New Testament in a beautifully illustrated edition which sells for five dollars. If ever there was an invitation to our Catholic laity to read the New Testament, it is to be found in this fine volume. It is to be hoped that priests will recommend its use.

A recent book on Our Lady's Assumption, *La mort et l'assumption de la Sainte Vierge: Etude historico-dogmatique* (Vatican City: Vatican Library, 1944), by the famed theologian, Fr. Martin Jugie, A.A., has aroused a great deal of interest and controversy in Europe. Not since the appearances of Fr. De la Taille's *Mysterium fidei* and Fr. Marin-Sola's *L'evolution homogene du dogma catholique* has any one book so dominated the interest of theologians as Fr. Jugie's masterpiece does today. Fr. Jugie's book (soon to be reviewed by Dr. Alfred Rush, C.SS.R. in this magazine), has already drawn a sharply critical notice from the famed Franciscan scholar, Fr. Charles Balić, O.F.M., in the pages of the Roman periodical *Antonianum* (XXI, 1 [Jan. 1946], pp. 3-67). This review, which takes the form of the article "De definabilitate assumptionis B. Virginis Mariae in caelum," has since been reprinted in pamphlet form by the editors of *Antonianum.* It will form a part of a forthcoming complete treatise on the